

SMITH'S

MAGAZINE

SEPT., 1920

20 CENTS



Contributors * KATHARINE HAVILAND TAYLOR *
ELMER BROWN MASON * KAY CLEAVER STRAHAN *
WINONA GODFREY * MADAME LONQUILLE * DR. WHITNEY *
NINE O'HAGAN AND OTHERS



His Diary

Sept. 12—Arrived right side up. School again tomorrow and my SHEAFFER Fountain Pen is filled with words of wisdom. Someone very distracting on the other side of the desk. She is surely *some* peach. It takes a mighty good pen to write under such difficulties.

Her Diary

Sept. 12—Arrived safe. School opens tomorrow and my lovely new SHEAFFER quite prepares me to take down copious notes. Somebody very interesting came and sat opposite me today, and I noticed he uses a SHEAFFER too. So far our tastes agree.

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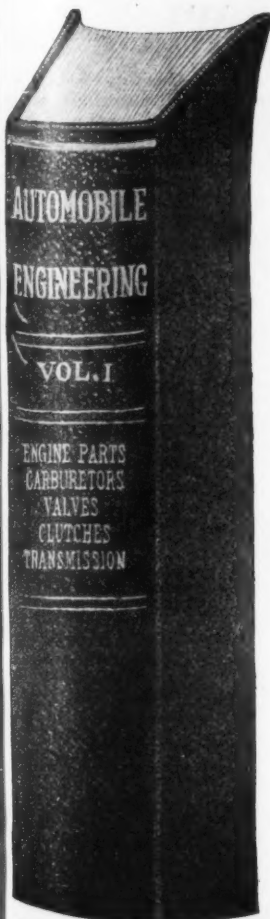
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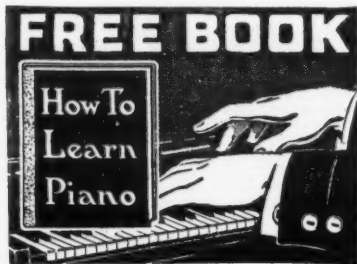


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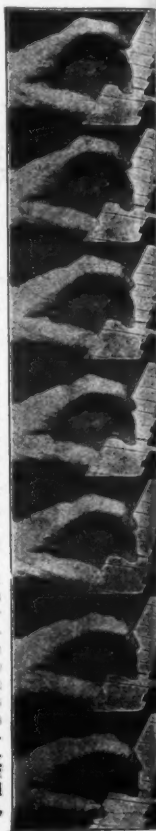
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SMITH'S MAGAZINE

Volume 31

SEPTEMBER, 1920

Number 5

Marry in Haste and Love at Leisure

By Katharine Haviland Taylor

Author of "Cecilia of the Pink Roses," "Yellow Soap," etc.

ILLUSTRATED BY R. VAN BUREN

With no apparent effort Katharine Haviland Taylor can draw as real people as ever lived on a printed page. You will like this latest story of hers, and you'll like it enormously.

CHAPTER I.

MRS. MARDEN-FINK?" said Mrs. Langstroth. "No. I have an aversion to hyphenated names, and especially when they emanate from money made in roach paste, or was it scouring soap? But it doesn't matter, the whole thing is impossible!"

Mrs. Langstroth ran a faint line through one name on a long list of many, and sighed. She was tired of the endless round of social affairs and of her many obligations, and Southampton demanded much. In the old days, when her daughter, Alice, had been a child in pinafores, Southampton had been sweetly domestic. Parties then were country parties; luncheons, simple dinners. Now, it was all a miniature of town in winter.

"There," said Mrs. Langstroth, standing up, "that is done! Have you seen Frank this morning?"

Alice, looking over the invitation list, shook her head.

"I think he's rather cut up," she said casually. "I imagine Louise has been

playing with him again. I told her he had a devilish temper, but it made no impression. For my part——"

"Just so," agreed Mrs. Langstroth. "They are quite unsuited."

As she finished speaking she pushed aside the breakfast tray and turned her eyes to a hazy spot of tangled cobalt and green seen through a far break in trees. The peacock colors of the marshland, lit by sunlight, were more than lovely. A sky, evidently borrowed from Italy, was a deep, far-sink-ing blue.

Alice arose.

"I'll lunch with Polly Danforth," she said. "She cleaned me out in auction Friday night. We'll play to-day, I suppose; I'd like to retrieve. By the way, mother, what did you do about Simsey?"

Mrs. Langstroth shut her lips firmly.

"What *could* I do?" she demanded.

Alice shrugged her shoulders.

"Difficult to get another now," she said. "However, it's your matter. But —don't ask me to go to town to do your



"Anything for me?" asked Amy, smiling nervously.

hiring. It's simply frightful. Minton Enright said it was a hundred and two Friday for *hours*, and I loathe the trip at best."

The Langstroths were a family of decided characteristics. They were pleased to call themselves firm; they were called by others stubborn. Mr.

Langstroth had been mild, and died early in life; he had to; there was no other way for him to distinguish himself. Mrs. Langstroth had married him, thought for him, and ordered him about, and he had made a really admirable husband for her. The only time he had ever disobeyed was when he achieved pneumonia and let it get the better of him.

Mrs. Langstroth always spoke of his death as unnecessary—when she spoke of it. She did not waste much time on things that had been.

Alice probably wore the family characteristics most apparently, but Frank had them in his heart most deeply and viciously. And, added to his firmness, was a temper, a temper that had grown from a too-indulged boyhood, a primrose-gathering youth, and a sometimes bad manhood. Joseph, the younger brother, was the nearest to human. He had always had trouble with his back, fussed with a crooked spine and felt too ill for any stern dramatics. And he ruled them all, when he chose—which was rarely—with the strongest reins that God can put into the hands of any man or woman—the reins of appeal, through pity.

And now we begin the story of the enchanted land into which Frank Langstroth's temper took him, and of his period of blindness, and then his new-found sight—a sight that was wonderful and gave him occasional glimpses of a place called heaven, which always surrounded his particular angel.

CHAPTER II.

Amy Marsh was sitting in a "serve-yourself" restaurant and wearily watching a very fat man absorb hot butter cakes. It was July and in New York, and it was miserably hot and sticky. It had rained the day before and the damp had let loose undesirable smells from the gutters.

Amy decided she would have a glass of milk, and then she decided she would not. The last time she had taken milk, the young man who "poured" had filled the glass too full and it had run over, down through his fingers and back into the none-too-clean-looking can. It had left Amy rather miserable. She had said "The Purple Cow" over nine times while she drank it. Of course, the milk could not be wasted, it had cost five cents; and repeating verse *docs* divert one. But, she went home, which was up nine flights and down a hall, thought of the young man's finger nails, and lost the glass of milk and a three-cent roll; so, after all, the effort had been for naught. It was discouraging, but a good deal in Amy's life had been of that flavor. However, she didn't often have time to realize it, which was fortunate.

This day, after a cream puff and a slice of bologna, she got up, brushed some crumbs from her linene lap, and went out. Her head ached from heat and bad and insufficient food, and her body cried out for bed, even if it was a lumpy one, but her feet and determination took her to Mrs. Sansom's Employment Bureau, which is several miles downtown and then several miles up heaven.

In Mrs. Sansom's room were three sullen-looking women who rather smelled of shortening and who could demand anything they pleased in the world and get it.

"Anything for me?" asked Amy, smiling nervously.

"Yes," answered Mrs. Sansom, her manner warming with the approach of her percentage. "Go in. It's Mrs. Langstroth. Doubtless you've heard of her. She's had to dismiss the secretary I sent her last month. I shall never recommend *that* young woman again! Go in."

Amy went, smiling. She was doubtful about Mrs. Sansom's stern threat. She knew something about life.

"Can you spell?" demanded Mrs. Langstroth, without other greeting.

"Yes," answered Amy.

"Very probably you can't, but let it go! Can you add and divide and do all that stupid kind of thing? I *must* have that in a secretary. It is essential."

"Yes," answered Amy, suppressing a great desire to laugh.

"H'mm—let me see your hands."

Amy stretched them out obediently.

"You are not writing a book or doing anything of that sort, and—ah—getting information from the inside?"

Amy surveyed her hands. She could not think why they would suggest.

"No," she protested. "I don't write well. I express my own real feelings clumsily."

"Can you go back with me?" asked Mrs. Langstroth.

"Where, and when, please?"

"Southampton, to-night."

For a moment, Amy shut her eyes.

"Yes," she answered none too steadily, "I—I can."

"Very well," said Mrs. Langstroth. "I shall be going down this afternoon, three-something, I think. You can take that train, too, and then Wilson will not have to meet the train again. I try to be good to my dependents."

Amy murmured something that tried to be "I'm sure of it," and then Mrs. Langstroth wandered out, stopped at the desk to get further credentials, and Amy followed.

Amy spent the next hour in getting home. She recklessly took the elevated for a mere nine blocks, and then got out and bought a much marked-down, frightfully durable-looking frock and a perfectly nude hat, upon which she planned to drape a bureau scarf which her best friend had bestowed on her at Christmas. It was a very flimsy bureau scarf and would do nicely, and hats are priced far more reasonably when bought in the raw.

She went up the many flights, opened the door of her room, emptied her bureau drawers on her bed, and began to pack. It was thrillingly exciting. To be going to the seashore, and not to eat at the Excelsior Lunch Room any more, nor to tramp holes in her shoes hunting work!

Then came the walk to the Pennsylvania Station, the fumbling about for her money, which, housed in a little purse and then a bigger bag, would evade, and then the walk down to the Long Island trains, and the wait at the gate. Mrs. Langstroth stood, icily irreproachable, though perspiring, and Amy had her first hint of her status.

"But I don't care," she thought, as she intently studied the back of a fat man's neck. "I don't care. I will stand anything just for real food and a little unused air. If I can only please!"

The gates opened and the crowd started down.

To Amy, the ride was soothing; everything was quite perfect, and a wonderful beginning to Fairyland. The car interested her. It had been years since she'd ridden in anything but a day coach. The people interested her more. They were all painfully marked by a tired look which seemed strange. "I should think they'd be happy," thought Amy, as she watched a very attentive maid lower a shade for a petulant mistress. "To think of being fussed over like that—having ribbons run in your underthings and your hair brushed—" Her thoughts roved off and she dreamed the "Shopgirl Dream," which consists of a dash of Chambers, much Cupid, and several tons of the stuff that starts Mr. Carnegie's libraries. It all seemed very simple and beautiful, idyllic; and the groove for unhappiness small, indeed.

After a little nap, she awoke with the sudden stop of the train and saw Mrs. Langstroth gathering up her paper and her dull-silk coat.

"I suppose she would have let me go

on through," thought Amy, "thinking it was my business, and, of course, it is. I do hope I'll please!"

But she had not dreamed how much she wanted to please until she saw the house and the grounds—the gentle slopes, the hazy green, the carefully planted bushes which massed and faded against taller brothers. And then the fresh, wet smell, with just a tang of salt, and the stirring, cool, cool air!

"This is so lovely!" said Amy, as the motor stopped beneath a portecochère.

If Mrs. Langstroth had looked at her, she would have been disturbed. She disliked sentiment or emotionalism, and her new secretary's eyes were brimming.

"Yes," she answered carelessly, "it is a pleasant little place. Is this all your luggage? Wilson, have Miss Marsh taken to the left wing. Give her the blue room and the room next to it for

her sitting room. Tell Mrs. Howell that those are my orders. And do not let me see this car as dusty as this again. It does not please me."

"Yes, madam," said Wilson; and then to Amy, "this way."

The house was rambling and full of



"Has she always been straight with you?" she heard herself say.

turns. Amy followed the man across a porch and toward the back of the place. There she met Mrs. Howell, who, having been reared in what she was pleased to speak of as "the old country," pronounced her own name like that of a bird far famed for wisdom and late hours. She was glad, indeed, to meet Miss Marsh, and she "'oped she would be 'appy." She added that Southampton was very restful, and that the "hair v as henvigorating," and would she have a bite here on the porch or would she like her dinner in her room. The secretary usually had her meals served in her sitting room, as there were no social "hequals" among the staff. Amy, full of sudden nervous reaction and all the sag of a completely eased strain, said she would have it in her room and, following Mrs. Howell, she went aloft.

The room in which Amy stepped was large. It was full of low and well-padded chairs. Below a deep, wide window was a cushioned seat; there were white bookcases along one wall; and a fireplace, and a tiny table by the bed, with a delightfully fluffy night light on it, flanked by a thermos bottle. At the foot of the bed was a day bed, across which was a coverlet done in pinks and blues, and from the broad windows was a view of the sea caught through the sheltering, gently green trees that surrounded the house.

The adjoining room was a workshop and a living room. A typewriter stood on a desk. There were files and a long table. The furniture here was a pale tan, decorated with tiny bunches of painted flowers, stiff in their painted baskets. In truth, it was rather like a Fifth Avenue tea room, but Amy was not critical. She turned back to her rose-and-white bedroom and sank down on the window seat.

Mrs. Howell, after a few polite murmurs, left.

Amy sighed. She remembered that, when she was small and having an un-

believably good time, she used to pinch herself to prove herself awake. She pinched herself now and she *was* awake. Then some one tapped on a door and a stiff-looking individual entered, carrying a tray.

It was full of little dishes. Amy tested the contents and was not entirely sure of their sex in all cases, but she enjoyed everything immensely.

And, with a French pastry in one hand and a spoon full of chocolate parfait in the other, she closed her eyes and prayed.

"God," she entreated fervently, "*please* let it last! I *can't* go back! I *can't*!"

CHAPTER III.

A week, and Amy began to fit her new groove, and to find herself so marvelously at home and content, that the old times seemed years, not days, gone by.

She found that her work took her almost all over the huge house, which was spoken of as "The Cottage." If Alice had work for her, she was summoned to the second floor and Alice's apartment, where Alice, from behind chin straps, soothing creams, and steaming towels, would give orders in a cool, detached voice which well echoed her lineless face. Mrs. Langstroth's work was done everywhere, often while she inspected the grounds.

Amy accompanied her during these rambles, taking dictation between complaints, for Mrs. Langstroth occupied every moment of her overcrowded days. After reading "How to Live on Twenty-four Hours a Day," she had even used her bath minutes for memorizing poems; but, after dropping two poet-autographed books in the lavender-scented water, she had abandoned this practice and taken up some one's facial exercises instead.

Often, in the afternoon, work took her to a secluded corner of the library, and it was here that she first encoun-

tered Joseph Langstroth. He was the only Langstroth who ever noticed servants of any sort, or made talk with them. Amy drew his attention by her incredible dowdiness. His pity was at once attacked, and after that, his interest. He found, when he could forget her British-flavored clothes, that her face was really marvelously beautiful and that her hair was a wonderful mane, mismanaged. Joseph, being something of an artist, quite remade Amy, in mind, as he sat, with an open book on his knees, or before the writing table, making pictures of dinky birds on heavy, hand-made paper decorated by the Langstroth crest.

This day, a cool, wet one, found Amy in the library corner, blown there by the breeze that Mrs. Langstroth had made in passing, her directions having been given while her employer was getting into motor things.

Joseph Langstroth sat before a fire, with a butterfly book, open, across his knees.

"Don't you like New York?" he asked, as Amy slipped a new sheet of paper into her typewriter. "I heard your enthusiasms about this place—I think you were speaking to the housekeeper—and they led me to wonder."

"No," answered Amy, "I loathe it."

"Why?" he asked. He was a real New Yorker, therefore the viewpoint an incredible one to him. The day was dark and dreary, and even a little stimulus, such as a new opinion, was welcome. "By the way," he continued, interrupting his thoughts, "you have a very musical speaking voice. Do you know it? I should be interested to know where you learned your inflections—they are, you know, really good!"

"Where does any one learn to speak?" she answered in a none-too-cordial tone. "At home, I suppose. It is too long past for me to remember the process."

"Ah, quite so," agreed Joseph, and he

looked at Amy with more interest. She had a manner, too. He could not quite make it out. "You said you didn't like New York?" he went on. "Just why not? I can't imagine that sentiment. Of course, one is bored by it occasionally, tried by it often—especially during traffic congestion—but it is *the* place! Now, isn't it that to you?"

"Do you know my New York?" Amy asked. "Cheap restaurants and crowds, and standing up on the elevated, and picture shows scented with musk? Yours is the limousine class; mine wasn't even the Ford. I had hard luck there, too. That always tempers one's loves."

"What sort of hard luck?"

"Work—or rather, the lack of it. I had a splendid position. I counted and listed the parts of gas masks. It was a government job and then—they stopped using them. I was glad of that, but—I have got kind of used to eating. I learned to do that when I was young. Mr. Langstroth, here's a name I can't make out. I am not quite used to Miss Alice's writing yet." She got up and took the list to him.

"Peyster," he said. And then, "What do you think of us?" He looked at her quizzically, enjoying her confusion.

"I——" she stammered. "I—I would hardly say, after only a week. How could I?"

"True, how could one!"

Amy was silent. The click of her typewriter filled the dark-walled room.

"Enough light?" asked Joseph Langstroth, after several minutes of silence.

"Yes, thank you," answered Amy.

And then, from the porch came the sounds of voices, and the door opened. Alice Langstroth, followed by three young women and two young men, entered.

"So perfectly ripping!" she said. "I love bathing when it rains! Miss Marsh, just show those cards to Miss Poindexter, and the lists—you have



"My time is valuable," began Mrs. Langstroth, "and, my good man, I will ask you to——"
 Jo went out on to the porch and fumbled in his pockets.

them here? That's good. Aches to-day, Joe?" she asked, as she saw her brother using a cane.

"A few," he answered shortly.

"Stupid!" thought Amy, as she gave the lists for a club dance to a tall, blond young person who affected greens. "Why doesn't she help him play the sport? Not that he needs it!"

"How many have you got out?" asked Alice.

"I've reached the T's," answered Amy.

"Must be frightfully jolly, typing!" said a young man who was staring rather too hard at Amy. "Fun to pound those little keys and all that sort of thing? Dashed if I wouldn't like to try it!"

"You may," said Alice. "Miss Marsh is through; aren't you, Miss Marsh?"

"Yes," answered Amy, and then, with a little nod and a murmured good afternoon, which no one answered, she left the room. In her own room, she sat down before her cheerfully leaping fire and gave herself up to thought balance.

To do this she went back twenty years, which made her seven, and a little daughter of the big doctor of the small town. Her mother, a rather frail creature, who badly mismanaged the house and spoke beautiful French, was the center of the picture. Amy remembered her best as wearing lacy negligees, reading quantities of books, and complaining about the servants. She occasionally kissed her little daughter, but she rarely took her eyes away from her book when she did this; she was engrossed in romance. She felt that she had lost it, and her thirst for it was intemperate. Accordingly, she drank all that she could from every source—except the real one, the arms of her husband and the love of her child.

For Amy's mother was one of the spoiled and petted women who had braved everything in marrying the man she loved, and lost everything from her marriage, simply because her soul was too little to hold enough love water for her flowers. And so, she had taken to complaint, her pretty mouth soon dropped from habit, and her husband wore a frown that she painted between his brows. Then, when Amy was fourteen and just at the lanky, wistful, reaching, and very sensitive period, he died, leaving a mountain of bills and an utterly bewildered and frightened wife. And she, after more complaints, always prefaced by "I don't mean to say anything against Hubert, but—" she, too, died.

Amy went to live with an uncle, who had a large, noisy, thoroughly healthy and quarrelsome family, who considered the little girl who spoke French

"queer" and put her through a series of child tortures which would have been amusing if, to Amy, they had not been so tragically real. As it was, she had spent a good many nights crying herself into a weariness that demanded sleep, and then she stopped crying altogether, and that was really worse. When her uncle offered to send her to a business college—she had grown to sixteen by that time—she accepted his offer and his rather ponderous advice gratefully, and, after two years' hard work, paid him back and went to live in New York.

And her life taught her this: that people cannot be happy together who have not the same ideas of life, in general, and who have not spent their lives in approximately the same grooves.

She remembered her father's saying: "We dreamed it differently—didn't we?" and his unhappy laugh.

She remembered her mother's: "But, Hubert, I miss the things I was used to—so much! I'll *always* miss them! I've found they were a part of me!"

She remembered her uncle's: "But corned beef and cabbage is good enough for my girls—why don't *you* like it?"

"No," she said aloud to the fire, "I am more my father than my mother. And I have added to his part of me, by using his heritage, the gift of plodding work. Even if—some one with lots of money, some one nice—did care—it wouldn't be wise—"

She looked into the fire thoughtfully. She supposed she was being very foolish, but the kind eyes of Joseph Langstroth danced before her.

"Even if *I* were happy," she thought, "*he* would not be! Not that type! I couldn't accommodate. Nothing could make me risk it. But, if I'd been trained to it, and could bear the emptiness—how wonderful!"

And then she recalled something that La Rochefoucauld said: "There may be some good, but there are no happy marriages." Perhaps this was true, but, at

least, one could be careful not to marry some one who walked a different life road. Her mother and father had taught her that, and—because too many remembrances of those days rose before her, she dismissed a possibility and turned hurriedly to the new book. She was to outline its plot to Alice, who "hadn't had a minute to read it." It seemed that every one else had, and so, of course, it must be read. After two pages, Amy laid it across her knee and looked out of the window.

She wondered if Mr. Frank Langstroth, who would return from the Adirondacks on the morrow, were like the rest. And what the girl he so admired was like. And then, she got up and turned a switch, and again settled down. Alice wanted to be able to talk about the best seller at a lunch which was scheduled for Friday.

CHAPTER IV.

In spite of the many happenings, days were, after all, a good deal the same. Mrs. Langstroth invariably appeared for an eight o'clock breakfast—one of her stern habits—had it on the porch because of the view, at which she never looked, and, after it, gave Amy her day's directions and inquired whether there was anything in the papers about which she should know.

"The Balkan States——" began Amy one morning.

"Unnecessary," broke in Mrs. Langstroth. "No one will mention them. Is any one of importance engaged?"

"Miss Frances Ellery to Captain James Fordyce."

"Never heard of her."

"William Hotchkiss is dead," went on Amy.

"Um—mother was a Platt. Very good stock, but she married a button factory which was attached to her husband. Fearfully low, that sort of thing! My dear, read me the headlines."

And Amy read. This happened, this

general plan, with variations, every morning. Then, at about ten, Alice would appear, dawdle about for a half hour, be hailed out by some comrades bent somewhere in a motor, and from that moment on be not alone a little moment until a late bedtime. The beach, a lunch, a motor ride, or auction; perhaps, a little later, a tea or music, then a dinner somewhere, with a crowd, or at home, with a crowd; dancing or cards, a supper, and bed—always thus filled, these days; filled, too, with chatter about some one's engagement, some one else's indiscretion, some one's erring husband, the latest book, a bit of statuary sold at the Knoblock Galleries to a friend—"absurd price!"—talk of frocks, discussion of some one who was trying desperately to storm the inner circles, raised eyebrows, amused glances, and on in the same track—always the same worn track, and seemingly never any sand.

Mrs. Langstroth spent her days in a good deal the same manner as Alice. They were a little more dignified; her foolish use of time, or misuse of it, covered by pretended absorption in girls' clubs and recreation houses, money for French widows and Belgian babies.

Joseph departed from the family tradition in his use of hours. His interest was violently attached to birds, butterflies, and Egyptian potteries. He was making a list of some vases of his, and with this list he occasionally demanded Amy's help. He was enough Langstroth to demand; he asserted his connection with the family when he voiced wants.

One morning, Humphries appeared upstairs and requested that Miss Marsh come down to the porch and let him follow with her typewriter. Mr. Joseph had some work for her.

"But," she objected, "I have some work for Miss Alice. She said I must get it out by noon. It is for some one else—some one to whom she offered help. I really don't see—will you ex-

plain to Mr. Joseph? I could do his work this afternoon."

Humphries departed. He reappeared in a few moments.

"He wants it now," he said, going toward the typewriter, as if the matter were settled.

"I don't know what I'm to do," Amy said, but she followed the man and the typewriter, like a good little sheep, down the broad stairs and out on to the porch.

Her eyes, when they encountered Mr. Joseph's, were resentful.

"Miss Alice won't like this," she said, "and I don't, either."

"Really?"

She saw he was in one of his teasing moods, and sat down before her typewriter, her attitude very "at attention."

"Ready?" inquired Joseph.

Amy nodded.

"Hey diddle, diddle, my fat hen!" said Joseph.

Angered, Amy rose, and just then Alice came up on the porch.

"My work done?" asked Alice.

"No," answered Amy.

"And why not?" demanded Alice. Her voice was none too pleasant.

"I needed her," said Joseph, "for some of my work. I knew you wouldn't object. It wasn't anything that could wait, or I wouldn't have borrowed your time. Alice, that hat is effective. Why not wear that when Stearns paints you? The simple is so rarely sought! Rather good note, you know!"

"Perhaps," she answered. And then, "When you get through with my brother's work, will you come upstairs, Miss Marsh? I have an hour to myself, and we might as well use it." And then, with a nod, she was off, her tennis racket flung on one chair, a yellow sweater tossed on another.

"I'm afraid I'll have to use that hour," called Joseph after his retreating sister.

"Very well!" she retorted. "But, if you don't, I can."

Amy recalled encounters between Al-

ice and her mother; repressed differences that had been terrible with the icy wrath that had seeped up through their restraint, that had come to being over just such trifles as this using of another's time. She wondered how Joseph achieved it.

"When I was a little chap," he said, as if he understood all her questionings, "I lay down on a rug and held my breath when I didn't get my way. I was never strong, and the doctors considered this a great strain for me. I then formed the family habit toward me. You know, if you want things very badly, you can always lie down on the rug and hold your breath until you get purple—in one way or another—and then do and get what you want to, without interference."

"You can!" said Amy bluntly. "I'd be dismissed."

"You're too plastic."

"I have to be."

"Oh, no!" said Joseph. "You're pretty enough to be willful, but you don't know how to use your prettiness, which is too bad. Have you ever worn coral, very faint coral? I think I've seen some of those lawn frocks, with wide, white-lawn collars and cuffs, in that—or a peach shade would bring you out wonderfully! Usually blondes have to be careful, because as a rule their skins are doubtful, but you——"

"Vases this morning?" asked Amy.

"No, clothes. Then you should hold up your head when you walk, and achieve a little arrogance, and then some one will say: 'Do you know that Mrs. Langstroth's secretary is really a beauty?' And I will have the proud feeling that I——"

"I don't like this," said Amy.

"No?"

"No. I think you don't realize that you're making it hard for me."

"Oh, I don't want to do that! I simply like to see the best of everything brought out, and you—so plainly neg-

lect it. My child, what makes you cultivate that hideous blue frock? It is so plainly 'useful.' It makes you almost ugly!"

"It was marked down to two-something," replied Amy meekly, "and I sought for use. Now, can we start?"

"Yes. Let me see! Hand me that book—the footnote is in French, I think. I'll translate it for you."

"I speak French," said Amy. Then she looked up at Joseph and added: "Probably a great deal better than you do. I am trying arrogance. Do you like it?"

"Where did you learn to speak French so beautifully?" he asked, with a hint of sarcasm in his voice. He shifted in his chair to face her squarely, and his cane clattered to the floor.

"Reform school," she answered, as she bent above the book, read the footnote, translating and typing it rapidly into English. "Ask Marie," she added, "whether I don't speak French well. We talk about the weather every morning."

"Better talk about clothes," suggested Joseph. "Marie has repressed my mother beautifully. Mother is somewhat given to overjetting herself."

Amy laughed.

"I must be a frump!" she said. "Do I really get on your nerves?"

They worked steadily, after that, for an hour, after which time a motor drew up at the drive side of the porch, and a tall, too-good-looking young man vaulted over the railing.

"Lo, Jo," he said in a tired voice. "How are you? Mother in?"

"Well!" said Jo. "Miss Marsh, this is my wandering brother. Frank, this is Miss Marsh, who is now doing beautiful typing for us."

Frank nodded casually and muttered something apt, but Amy, looking at him steadily, saw that he did not see her. His restless eyes were moving about the porch, and his nervous little motions

showed a wound-up, tight-inside feeling that did not look happy.

Amy, who had stood up and reached for the typewriter cover, was told by Jo to go on.

"He won't be here more than six seconds," said Jo, with an affectionately understanding look toward his brother.

"By the way," said Frank, after Jo had described a new-found butterfly. "I thought Louise Corliss was coming down. Is she here?"

"Not yet, but perhaps she's coming. Alice is expecting some people around five o'clock, I think. I've hardly seen her for days. Louise may be coming down in that crowd. I really don't know who is. Have you seen her lately?"

"No."

"Thought you stopped in New York?"

"I did," said Frank. "But I didn't go there. I think she's with her other aunt in Newport. Couldn't get a trace of her or reach her by phone." His voice had grown sullen and his eyes shadowed.

"We expected you here last week," said Jo.

"Rather expected to get here, but—oh, other things!"

"Mother'll be glad to see you."

"No doubt," said Frank dryly. Then he stood up, shrugged his shoulders, and went into the house.

"Touchy," said Joseph. "Girl fuss. Nothing suits him. Has a devilish temper, too! Worse than all the rest of the tempers of all the rest of the family put together and boiled down! And now you are resenting my confidences again, while you should enjoy them. If you were a clever young woman, you could glean enough information from me for a life-endowment blackmailing scheme, but— Here, give me that book, please. I don't agree about that."

Amy smiled at him. He was really a dear!

Upstairs, Frank wandered toward his sister's room and knocked at her door.

Alice's maid answered the door and explained that the masseuse was with Miss Alice. Frank strode into the small sitting room and called roughly:

"I want to see you! Can't you do your fussing some other time? Seems to me pretty tough when a fellow's gone a month and——"

"Just a minute," said Alice. There was a sound of some one moving about, and then Alice, chin strapped, a steaming towel across her forehead, and her nose shining with a pasty white cream, came out.

"I'm just ready to be rubbed," she said petulantly. "What is it?"

Frank looked at her, laughed shortly, and replied:

"Who's coming down to-night?"

"Alf Grinnel, Ida Gibson, Clarice Vallete, Smith Seymour, and Proctor Matlack."

"Why didn't you ask Louise?"

"I didn't know you were coming back."

"You didn't? That's a lie!"

"Hush! Miss Bjornson is in there, and she talks terribly! Tell her anything you want started in the village! Honestly, Frank, we didn't know when you were coming down."

Again Frank laughed, and this time more unpleasantly. Alice looked around at the door apprehen-

sively, and then coolly asked: "Have you been drinking? It seems a little early for it."

"No," he replied too agreeably, "I am sober. Quite sober! Why didn't you ask Louise? I just want to know, simply want to know, Alice. It seems to me you might try to know her a little better, your future sister. Don't like her, is that it?"



And she dreamed a little, a dream that was all tangled up in a loving prince, money, ease, and pretty frocks.

"No," she said with a nervous spurt of truth, "I don't! I'll ask her if you're coming down, but if you're not, I won't!"

"Oh, I see."

"She's insincere."

"Oh, Goddess of Truth! That must offend!" Frank dropped his hand and surveyed his sister.

"I've done it!" she thought. "Rage, and then gloom for weeks!"

"Has she always been straight with you?" she heard herself say.

Frank grew white.

"I—I didn't mean that, Frank," stum-
bled Alice.

"Said it to be pleasant, didn't you? To keep the ball of conversation rolling. Well, to be frank, I don't think she cares any too much for you, either. She's not a fool. But mother will write her, and you will add a line. I want to see her, and her aunt's indulging in some sort of a prostration and her house has turned into a retreat. Shuffling trained nurses, doctors, drug smells—God!" Again Frank looked at his sister and laughed unpleasantly. "So," he inquired, "you don't like the idea of my marrying Louise? I am pleased by your interest! It is unusual—and sweet, of course! Could any one I chose please you?"

"If you must know it, any one could, better than Louise!" she answered hotly.

"I'll remember that—if she turns me down. She's threatened to."

"I can imagine it!" Alice said sweetly. "Why, she's marrying you for what she can get out of you, and as long as that is yours, the engagement will last. She happens to love Proctor Matlack. I know because——"

Alice stopped suddenly. Her brother's eyes had made her. He glared, and then, turning from her, left the room. The door slammed after him until the walls shook.

"I mustn't frown," thought Alice, "or all this steaming will go to waste!"

CHAPTER V.

It is a fact that one drop of ink will discolor a glass of water. Alice had provided the ink. Frank, none too good himself, unhappily acquainted with too many unhappy marriages, untrue matings, found in himself a beautiful soil for doubt. Few women were good, true, or anything but liars, but, if Louise weren't—he'd give up!

When had he ever seen Proctor Matlack with her? But there were weeks when they didn't meet, weeks! And New York was big. Was Proctor South at the same time she was last winter? He tried to think and could not remember. Had he ever met Proctor at Louise's aunt's house? Once, he recalled, at tea, but there had been at least ten other people there, too. And she had never shown him any especial consideration—or had she? He tried to remember, failed, and reached for some stationery, just as his mother stepped into the library.

"My dear boy," she said, looking around with a roving eye, "so glad to see you! Ring for one of the maids—I never saw so untidy a room! How long will you be with us? Alice tells me that you would like Louise asked down for Sunday. I have written her. Have you seen the dear girl recently?"

"I have not seen the 'dear girl' recently," replied Frank, smiling ironically. Alice's feeling he knew to be shared by his mother, and, therefore, her motherly and loving attitude amused, even while it enraged him.

"Well, you will see her soon! And won't that be splendid? I've just had the most unpleasant experience! Wilkins ran over a dog on West road—a dog belonging to a farmer's child. They had the effrontery to ask that I make a financial settlement, and I was forced to descend there, in the dust, and

tell them all exactly what I thought of them. I said we might have been killed, and that their dog should have been tied! I explained how annoying the whole affair was to me! Humphries, I have rung for you to have some one come and tidy up this disgraceful room! Do not let this happen again! Then I drove on. The child, nasty little thing, screamed! No thought was given me, and it made me inexcusably late for Mrs. Summers' lunch!"

"Should have settled," said Frank.

"Settled!" squawked his mother.

"Yes. They had the law in their favor, I think."

"I would fight it with my last cent!" said Mrs. Langstroth through set teeth. "Frank, how dare you say—"

"If that man has any sense he'll—"

"What are you talking about, when the dog was out there in the middle of the road, lying there and—"

Joseph entered, and there was a moment's lull. He used it.

"Isn't this homelike?" he said, grinning at them appreciatively. "You people are in fine form! By the way, mother, there's a man out in the hall. Wants to see you about a dog. Says you ran over one and he can 'have the law again yuh.' I told him he'd better light out before you found him."

"I shall deal with his case!" said Mrs. Langstroth, and, head high and joy in her eyes, she sailed toward the hall.

"Poor chap!" said Jo, as he sank into a deep chair and stared at a dull-toned old Madonna which money had taken from a little old Italian church and put on a wall of the house belonging to the "Scrapping Langstroths." "I always feel so sorry for the other fellow. Haven't we tempers? Frank, did you notice mother's secretary?"

"Lord, no! Why should I?"

"That wasn't always your viewpoint. Well, she's so soft. I keep hoping mother won't open on her. I—I think about it quite a good deal."

"You? My heavens!"

"Yes, I."

"Well, don't get interested; it won't do," said Frank almost kindly. "We've never done that sort of thing. Never brought them into the family, you know. I don't believe in mixtures. I don't mean to be a snob, but when all tradition is different—I say, have your fling and settle up handsomely, and then choose some one that is suitable."

"Can you imagine me 'having my fling?'"

"Well, no. But, if you feel like that, and care for her—probably she'll be very glad to—"

Jo got up. He stared at his brother for a moment and then, very white, began to speak. When he finished, Frank was white. Then Jo went as fast as he could from the room. In the hall, he heard his mother talking loudly and convincingly about her rights. A man in rough clothing sat huddled up in a chair, looking timidly everywhere except before him, where Mrs. Langstroth stood.

"The missus," Jo heard the man say apologetically, "felt different, but I guess it'll have to be all right. I'm sure I didn't mean to offen' yuh, missus."

"My time is valuable," began Mrs. Langstroth, "and, my good man, I will ask you to—"

Jo went out on to the porch and fumbled in his pockets. He'd slip something to the man as he left. To be sure, the roughly clad individual would never respect him as he did his browbeating mother, but his, Jo's, conscience would be lighter. What a rotten bunch they were! Might and right, and greed and temper! He laughed in the family manner, shortly, and with a sound that hurt. He was thinking of his brother's advice as to *affaires de cœur*, and—of Amy Marsh.

"Next to Greek vases," he thought, "I probably care for her—more than anything!"



The two before him danced with the uneven pounding of his blood, and he felt a dizziness that first heated, then chilled.

And then, startled by his admission, he grew violently red and felt the blood pound in his throat. He hadn't counted on that possibility in his life. His scheme was tangled up with vases, birds, butterflies, and peace—not love.

CHAPTER VI.

Much happened in the next week.

Amy reviewed her clothes, learned really to dress her hair, and asked Marie's advice. She found that an inch difference in the wearing of a sash made





a ten-dollar difference in the look of a frock, and that one should never go downstairs without first inspecting the back of one's hair.

Amy also learned that, in buying, one should inspect the cut rather than the fabric.

"You feel," said Marie, squinting and half closing her eyes, "the dress stuffs between your fingers, so? Is it not true? Forget the stuffs, and have an eye to line! The line always, *always!*"

Joseph, having had a vague feeling, clarified by opposition, became moody, unaccountable, and ordered every one around wildly. Frank, being a vase for flowering suspicions, was as ugly as only a man may be who is full of his worst devil. No two Langstroths spoke to each other for three days. Messages were sent through a third person. Amy bore the brunt of most of these, because she was oftenest around and not quite a servant.

"Is Alice going out?" Mrs. Langstroth would inquire, with a basilisk eye fixed piercingly on the oleanders. Amy, to whom this question was addressed, would turn to Alice.

"You may do my work at your leisure," Alice might reply, "for I haven't time to outline more for you. We are motoring over to Sagawitch for supper."

This mother-and-daughter rupture had been caused by Alice's disagreement with Frank. "So unnecessary!" to quote Mrs. Langstroth.

Frank spoke to neither his sister nor his mother, and Joseph openly sneered at his brother for a cad. Certainly, though a somewhat warlike time, no one was bored. The Sunday party enjoyed it immensely. And it made splendid gossip for the next place.

Monday morning saw the evaporation of the guests. A few pasty-skinned young men stood in the hall making vague acknowledgment to Mrs. Langstroth. "It had been frightfully jolly,"

they said, and they'd all thought it "ripping," while their inattentive eyes roved outside for the expected motor.

Frank, who had dragged his guests and himself into a befogged and head-achy condition, drew near.

"Look here," he said with a booming hospitality, "I'm not going to let you go, Matlack! We've got to have some golf. I say, stop on until I lose this headache, and we'll go over the links. Best—best —" he stopped, trying to think of the name of the place where one played golf. He was sure he had had it a minute before.

"Links," supplied Matlack.

"Yes, links," echoed Frank. "Come, stay a day or so more! Long as you like!" He reached for a chair.

His head was making him abominably dizzy. "Shan't be alone long," he added carelessly. "Louise coming down tomorrow. Likes you, and she'll be frightfully bored with just us. No one speaking to each other, either. Hard on the poor girl! Come on, Matlack!"

Matlack looked at him a little too closely, Frank thought, and considered.

"Well," he answered, with a too-don't-care flavor in his voice, "rather think I will! Good links—yes, I will."

And so it was arranged.

Amy, passing through the hall at that moment, on the way to her rooms, felt a more than vague disgust. Such splendid-looking men, she thought, to be so poorly ready for a fresh, new day! And all so flat and unnecessary! She thought of the other men she had seen on the beach, many of them so vividly alive, clear-eyed, and splendid. It was not the place in life, but the manner of taking it.

There was a knock on her door and Humphries appeared. Even his well-trained, coolly lit eyes approved her.

"Mr. Joseph asks if you can help him for a bit, miss," he said, with a new respect in his voice. "And if so, I'll carry down the typewriter for you.

He's in the pergola, miss. There's a stiffish breeze there from the ocean. You'd best take a wrap."

"Thank you, Humphries," said Amy, as she turned to hunt a sweater.

Down on the porch, Frank sat near the latest guest, Miss Louise Corliss. She was drinking tea and submitting to Frank's admiration. In truth, she was rather bored by it, but she had acquired the habit of a pretty smile—she had lovely teeth—and she could turn this on with as little effort as most people expend on the hot or cold-water faucet. She wondered why, if Proctor Matlack were there, he wasn't around.

"Why don't you wear my ring, dear?" said Frank. His voice had lost all of the Langstroth quality. It was beautiful in its new tenderness. It almost broke on the "dear." Had a woman loved him, she would have had to kiss him for that unsteady homage.

Louise raised her brows.

"I'm not sure," she said.

"But—why not?"

"You acknowledge that you've not always been—good," she said falteringly. "Sometimes I think of that—I can't help it, Frank, and then—I grow afraid!"

Frank groaned and covered his eyes with his hand. An unpleasant number of escapades flew before him. He groped blindly for Louise's hand.

"If you knew how I've suffered since I met you!" he said. "Because of that—you'd forgive me and—trust me! I never would again. I couldn't face the possibility of—another shame like this. Louise, every man gets it—sooner or later. I believe even—the rottenest cad does! Please—believe me when I say you can trust me!"

"Who," she said, "is that lovely girl?"

Frank turned. He frowned in wonder, for a moment, and then said:

"Why, it must be Miss Marsh, mother's secretary—but I never thought her pretty."

Amy passed them at that moment, nodded, and then remembered Joseph's advice about her head.

"She's beautiful," said Louise. She looked keenly at Frank. It would be stupid to have *that* happen. However, after a casual look, his eyes came back to her, free and ready to be filled with her.

"I'd never noticed it before," he replied, "but she is. Her hair's a pretty color, I suppose. But, heavens! When you're anywhere near——"

Louise began to feign jealousy in a gently well-bred manner. Frank was in paradise.

"Would you hate to have me look at any one else?" he asked fatuously.

"My dear!" replied Louise. And then she added more honestly, "Some girls don't mind their sweethearts having a double-company standard, but it would *kill* me! If any man who had ever asked me to marry him paid court to a stenographer, or that sort, I'd feel—really degraded by his admiration. It wouldn't be worth having, you know!"

"Then, if I want to manage you, I'll admire Miss Marsh," said Frank.

"I'd be enraged!" answered Louise. "I mean it, Frank. Nothing would hurt me more!"

"Dear, I've been unjust to you," said Frank, his eyes so feeling-filled that they threatened tears.

"Pardon?" said Louise. But she was not answered, for Frank was kissing her hand, and he forgot such things as doubts and words, or hints from a clear-visioned sister.

The following day began well for Frank. His mother and he disagreed violently at breakfast on the relative values of soft and raw eggs.

Louise sat listening. The bell was under Mrs. Langstroth's foot, and she was totally oblivious to little things like other people's breakfasts, so Louise waited. This did not tend to make her charitable.

"I would like," she said plaintively, "some breakfast."

"Mother," said Frank disagreeably, "are you aware that you haven't rung? Louise is sitting here waiting."

"May I ask why you didn't remind me?" said Mrs. Langstroth. "My mind is taken up with large affairs. To-day I have eight committee meetings and a paper to read, and, naturally, such things as food escape my attention! They seem so little! Frank, will you please pass me the muffins? And I naturally expect my children to help me—what is the matter with this bell?—in the little duties; but"—she paused and sighed—"perhaps I expect too much! I should be used to burdens—I *should be*!"

"I dare say Wilkins will dig you up some worms, mother."

"I beg pardon?"

"Nothing. Did you sleep well, Louise?"

"Fairly, thank you."

"Edison, or Bergson, or somebody, says we all get too much sleep," said Mrs. Langstroth, "and I believe it. Especially young people! Now I—I hardly closed my eyes last night. Frank, will you please stop wiggling your foot? Oh, good morning, Proctor. How did you sleep? Such a senseless question! Far too much attention is paid to the physical. I read to-day, before the literary group of the Woman's Club, a paper on the 'Subjugation of the Material.' Very clever paper, because of the quotations which Miss Marsh found for me. She is almost too clever! One does not expect it in that class, does one? Golf this morning?"

"Got to go to town," said Frank, inspecting his plate. "Rotten sorry, but it can't be helped. Depend upon you, Matlack, to amuse Louise."

A glance shot between Louise and Proctor, a glance that Frank felt rather than saw.

"You poor boy!" said Louise softly. "How tiresome it will be!"

"I'm disappointed," admitted Frank. Joseph wandered in, looking unusually white and tired. "Thought I heard you up," he said with a faintly amused look. "What was the subject of the debate?"

"Eggs," replied his mother. "But I haven't time to explain my viewpoint. Is Miss Marsh in the hall? I have exactly thirty-two and a half minutes before my first meeting—hospital board—and so I will ask you to excuse me. Is Miss Marsh down yet?"

"In the hall," answered Joseph.

CHAPTER VII.

For the first time, since her attachment to the Langstroth ménage, Amy was the least bit inattentive.

"Aren't you *well*?" asked Mrs. Langstroth, looking at her watch and calculating the number of moments now lost.

Amy flushed.

"Yes," she replied, "but perhaps I'm a little nervous. And—I didn't sleep very well."

"Nerves and sleep," said Mrs. Langstroth with irritation, "are folly, especially in *your* case! No doubt your forebears tilled the soil, and that is excellent for nerves. Now, with me, it is, of course, quite different. Ah, what I suffer! And Edison, or perhaps it was that Norwegian philosopher, Bergson, said that sleep was unnecessary—at least, much of it."

"Bergson is French," said Amy; the "tilling ancestors" had irritated her.

"I think not," said Mrs. Langstroth heavily, with a cold look. The matter was settled; even Mr. Bergson himself could not have denied it. Mrs. Langstroth had a way of settling things. She never doubted her own decisions, therefore they were delivered as invincible.

After a few more minutes, punctuated with reminders of lost time and the number of remaining minutes, Mrs. Langstroth took herself off, and Amy

moved to an unfrequented corner of the huge porch. Here she worked rapidly for an hour. And then, that work fading, the moment came when thought could not be put away for longer.

It had been knocking at her consciousness all the morning, which was unfair, for she had given it quite enough time the night before.

There had been a little dance at the Langstroths' the previous evening, and Amy had wandered down into the garden better to hear the music. It had been lovely there in the moonlight, with the wet, night sea breeze making the foliage glitteringly silver and the weaker sisters of the flower family hang their heavy heads. Amy sat down on a marble bench, which had been captured from some old Italian garden, and, drawing her raincoat close, she listened to the music of men with her ears and the music of the night with her heart.

And she dreamed a little, a dream that was all tangled up in a loving prince, money, ease, and pretty frocks—a silly, seventeen-year-old dream which all girls dream until they are seventy, at least.

Then Joseph wandered by. Amy sat silent in the shadow and, when he was opposite her and quite unaware of her, she remarked in a low voice:

"You'll get your feet wet!"

He jumped, and then hunted her in the shadows.

"You scamp!" he said, when he found her, and then sat down, because she insisted, on a corner of her raincoat.

"This," he said, surveying its stodgily useful look, "was bought in London for nine shillings sixpence, or something equally awful, and it will wear for years! Oh, my dear!"

"Haven't I improved?" she demanded. "I didn't expect to see any one here. I'm beautiful under it, and would you have me wilt my finery, all for the benefit of the flora?"

"You can stand it," he said shortly,

"since you've learned to dress your hair."

"Don't let me keep you," she said, after a silence-filled moment. "I suppose you've lots of people to whom you must talk."

"I prefer to talk to some one to whom I have no obligation. Isn't that the irony of fate? Here there are hundreds of girls my mother would like me to talk to, and—and——" He stopped.

"And here you are talking to one she wouldn't want you to talk to," finished Amy without any rancor. "Well, you won't long. I must go in. Letters."

"She'd—she'd like me to talk to you! I didn't mean she wouldn't," said Joseph.

"What nonsense!" she answered gently. "You know she wouldn't. But don't think I'm hurt by that. I'm here to work. I want to do only that."

"Then—I have no chance for friendship with you?" asked Joseph. He heard his voice rise and fall unsteadily, and suddenly he understood why he had lain awake when the possibility of his mother's "taking it out of the new secretary" occurred to him. He understood with a cold shock finished by hot, pounding pulses. Pain, and interests in potteries and butterflies had kept that side of him in something like a slumber; now it was awake, wide awake.

"I want your friendship," he went on, twisting a button on the "durable coat." "I—I really need it! I've been a lonely chap, although I hadn't known it until you came. You are always kind—even right after breakfast. You know—we aren't—I wish you would give me your friendship!"

There was great wistfulness in his tone, and—hunger. Amy was touched by it. She turned to him and put her hand on his.

"I do like you," she said, "and if you want my friendship and feel that I am not a traitor to your mother through it, I, of course, give it to you."

Joseph turned his hand until his thin fingers clasped hers.

"You," she went on, "were always kind to me. At first, the others treated me so much like a machine. It—it was quite right, I know, but the human one needs smiles for oil, doesn't it? I should have felt lonely without your kindness at the start of things."

"I'm glad I was kind," said Joseph.

Amy, disturbed by his evident seriousness, made a laughing allusion to her coat and the possibility of going in.

"You'll have to move," she ended, "for I must! I didn't mean to invite you to sit on my six-shilling and nine-pence—wasn't it?—affair for the evening!"

Joseph did not move. He turned to her, and, when he spoke, she knew that she must hear him through.

"I want more!" he almost shouted. "Of course, you don't know me well enough to decide now, but how can I know you better? I realized to-night what's been wrong with me for—ages. It's you! You're so little and soft and dear, and when I thought of mother taking it out of you—I, well, I can't explain—but it comes in a leap, doesn't it—sometimes?"

"I suppose," said Amy, "that it does." And she smiled on Joseph, but there was an ache in her smile.

"Once I didn't believe that," said Joseph.

"Nor I," she answered.

"Amy—I could give you lots! Take care of you—give you care! It seems so strange to speak of money, but you've worked hard, so hard! I—I can't bear to think of it! I think it was all up with me on that day when I had a beastly time with my back, and you knew it, and didn't ask me how I felt, but played rag for me on the player, and were so awfully jolly, and all the time your dear eyes saying you were sorry! Amy——"

"Dear," she whispered, quite as she would have spoken to a child. "I can't!"

And then she quite frankly began to cry, and Joseph had to supply his handkerchief, as hers had gone somewhere.

She was all little girl, as she cried, her physical smallness intensified under the cloak of tragedy. Her sobs, several sizes too large, shook her cruelly.

Joseph put an arm around her shoulders.

"You mustn't," he said, as he moistened his lips. "It doesn't matter—I'm all right—you mustn't worry!"

"I can't hurt you," she whimpered. "It—it hurts to do that, but—I would more, if I did pretend. And you *are* so dear! I wish I could. I hate to hurt you! I would love the things you could give me—— Her voice faltered.

"I'm glad—you think that."

"Oh, I do!"

"That means a lot to me."

"Would you—is there a possibility of change?" he asked.

She didn't answer, but shook her head.

"No?" he asked gently.

Again she shook her head.

"Then," he said, "we are going to be very good friends, and you will forget this, unless you cut notches in your parasol for every 'refused.' Do you do that?"

"I've never had a parasol since I was six," she answered, trying, and none too successfully, to catch his return to everyday. "And you are the first man who has ever—asked me; and so, I guess I won't. Oh, Joseph!" She turned to him blindly. "It's cruel!" she went on. "Cruel! Why couldn't I care for you—for you instead——" She stopped speaking, tried to stand up, and was pulsed back by Joseph.

He stood up and put a steadying hand on her arm. Tears had blinded and dizzied her.

"You are very sweet and true and—good," he said slowly.

She shook her head.

"Now you're going to bed and to

sleep?" he went on. "You're not going to lie awake and cry?"

"Don't be so good to me!" she entreated with something like a sob, and then, blindly, she turned and threw her arms around his neck. Drawing his head down, she kissed him with a passion that was all gratitude and appreciation of his true greatness. For a moment, his arms strained her close, and then he stood erect, stiff, but shaking.

"That was—dear of you!" he said in jerks. "Now—you'd best—go in, for—I think it's getting damp."

She sped from him across the lawn toward the glaring lights of the house. Alone, he stood as she had left him, eyes closed, lips parted.

Amy, shaken and unnerved from the evening's development, was almost in a long pergola before she saw that there were two other people standing before her. Her footfall on the damp ground had made no sound, and they had forgotten the possibility of the shadows holding eyes; from the dark, the glittering house seemed to hold the only danger. Frank's fiancée was standing, close in Proctor Matlack's embrace. Her arms circled about his neck, now and again moving. Once a hand slid over his smooth hair, again she strained his face closer.

"Oh—God!" Amy heard the man gasp.

After that, the girl drew away, her eyes aglint, not with passion, but with pleased vanity.

"We really must go in, Proctor," she said. "Some one might see. It is so sweet to be here—with you!" she ended, as she probed the shadows with her glance. Her voice was entirely steady.

Amy, who had managed to back into a safely concealing shadow, and who was now averting her shocked eyes, heard them kiss once more, heard the man mutter some passion-broken endearments, the girl's tinkling voice whis-

pering advice about caution, and then she heard them walking down the stone slabs that lay between the marble pillars.

After that, Amy went to her room. She found an unusually tempting late supper on a tray in her sitting room, and she tried to eat it, but it would not go down. Even contrast thoughts of hot butter cakes and the Excelsior Lunch Room would not help it on its way. So she sat looking at it—thinking. Joseph and his part of the evening hurt, but it was the duplicity and cruelty of Frank's fiancée that hurt most deeply, and that which kept her wide-eyed and without the solace of tears, until the morning streaked the east with gold.

Amy came back from her reverie, turned to accounts, and, after a half hour, looked up as she heard some one upon the steps.

Frank Langstroth was coming across the porch.

"Decided not to go," he said in answer to her look. "The rest golfing?"

She nodded, and then tried to steady herself by telling herself she was absurd—absurd—simply absurd!

Frank sat down, took out his cigarettes, and lit up.

"Join them in a moment," he said lazily. "By the way, Miss Marsh, can you do a little work for me occasionally? My mother thought you could, and it would help me immensely. You know, I pretend to labor, and if I could sometimes get your help here, I wouldn't have to go to town."

"Of course I could," answered Amy. "I have very little to do. Really not as much as I'd like."

"Thank you," said Frank, studying her. Louise was right; the girl was almost dazzlingly beautiful. With proper frocks and a good maid, she would be a marvel!

He smiled, as he recalled Louise's

jealousy. That had been real. What a fool he was to imagine that Proctor had any hold on her! But, if he had, what a pleasure it would be to hurt Louise through Amy!

Amy looked up and caught the smile. She did not answer it. One of her greatest charms was a serene gravity.

"I was thinking," said Frank honestly, "what a pleasant person you would be to flirt with."

"Oh, no!" said Amy, ruffling the leaves of a card catalogue. "No! I can't! You see, I never learned. I'm afraid I'd spoil it all by loving at the wrong times. You can't love to do that well, can you?"

"Come to think of it, the most fascinating women *are* heartless!"

"And I have a large one—and so—I never could. Aren't you glad your name isn't J. Percival Guggenheim? Sometimes, when I'm very sad, I look over this catalogue. Some of the names cheer me up."

Frank laughed.

Then she got up, and with her, Frank. He watched her go, and then thought of the party on the links. He'd join them, he decided.

CHAPTER VIII.

Frank's day had started well, and it ended with a laugh; but, unfortunately, it was the family laugh, which rarely meant or came from happiness. His thoughts, as he motored over the rolling hills toward the links, were all of Louise. They were humbly tender thoughts, and they were really lovely, for Frank was entirely in love. He didn't quite see, he decided, why she should care for him, but—evidently she did! And then, he put on some extra speed. Minutes, away from her, borrowed the cloak of hours.

He left his car back of the club, and asked Sanderson, who was giving a golf lesson, whether he had seen the party from the Langstroth house.

Sanderson waved toward a wide level green, which ended abruptly in a little forest of firs, and Frank, without troubling to get his clubs, started in hunt.

There was no one in sight. With something like rage, he wondered whether Louise had dared to take Proctor to the spot where she had sat with him, talking, loving, and building dreams—Frank had done most of the last two. He could not believe that the spot would mean so little to her. No doubt he was sentimental, but—

He hurried and soon neared the line of green-black trees. Down a small path, slippery with needles and sand, and then a turn, and he saw the little rustic bench and—Louise and Proctor. Proctor was kissing Louise. Frank stopped, sidestepped behind the shelter of a low-growing, bushy sumac, and looked at the picture. All the rages that he had ever felt before faded in the strength of the one that now gripped him. The two before him danced with the uneven pounding of his blood, and he felt a dizziness that first heated, then chilled.

Louise turned, and slid an arm around Proctor Matlack's neck. She did it tenderly. She had never done that to Frank. Love had "frightened her." Frank had been touched by that, and unusually patient. She had given him only crumbs, and he had been horribly love-starved. All the rest of his meats of love had been served at a soiled table; and he found—that he liked clean linen. This, he had dreamed, his chance at decency! Some of his ugliest dallies took on halos in comparison.

He stood thinking. One of the most unfortunate things about his form of anger was that while it burned and ate, he could think and plan. He planned now. He would not step out and let Proctor feel himself the conqueror, nor Louise feel that she was a power. No, he would fix them both—make them suffer as he was suffering.

Very softly he turned. He'd fix Sander-son and Miss Marsh so that neither would mention having seen him. No one else knew that he hadn't gone to town. He hurried toward the club and met several people who called to him.

That plan was gone; he must play innocent—and feign a disappointment on not finding them. Still planning, he got into his car and drove home furiously. There, he took a stiff drink and lay down in a wide porch swing. An hour passed, and Louise and Matlack appeared.

"Why didn't you join us?" asked Matlack, his eyes shifting and a tight-muscled look around his mouth.

"Couldn't find you," said Frank, tossing aside a magazine. "I supposed you were on the lower links, and I have a bad heel—rubbed it through Tuesday, in the finals. I wanted to see you but, as the Frenchman said: 'The ghost is willing, but the meat is weak!' Frankly, walking went hard. Who took off the cup?"

"You poor dear!" said Louise, a relieved color spreading across her cheeks. "I'm so sorry about the foot! I beat Proctor—he let me. I can't bear to think of having missed all this morning with you!" She sat down in a near chair, and Proctor, laughing, took himself off.

"I'm not needed," he said sadly, but the look he gave Louise was curiously at variance with his light words.

Louise, of her own accord, kissed Frank. He returned it with a new fierceness. And then he kissed her again, and this time until he hurt her lips.

"The servants!" she said, drawing away.

"They all know we're engaged," said Frank.

"But are we?" said Louise.

"You have my ring."

"I'm considering you." She smiled at him coquettishly, after her words.

Her thoughts were with Proctor Matlack. If he were serious, how quickly she would dismiss Frank, in spite of incomes! But—was he? Last season, Proctor had madly loved a little thing who'd worn new, deep, sad crape; the year before, a little Frenchwoman who had played wonderful auction, and who had been taken up and dropped by society with the same lightning rapidity. Early in this season, it had been a bud, and now—Louise! But—how long?

"I want it announced," said Frank.

"Oh, my dear!" said Louise despairingly, and then memories of the morning made her brave.

"I won't have it announced," she said petulantly. "It—marrying—is a serious business and—we must be sure." Frank's dark look led her to lay her hand on his. "Suppose," she went on, "we keep it secret for three months, and if either of us changes before then, it won't be so horribly thrown into the public gaze."

"Either of us?" echoed Frank.

Louise, taking that for a tribute, smiled and patted his hand.

"You might!" she said.

"We'll draw up an agreement to that effect," said Frank, sitting up and reaching for a magazine. He found a sparsely printed advertising page and wrote an elaborate decree.

Louise, watching, was rather bored. Frank was so childish. She'd met his flights before in this same spirit. She could not understand anything that was not absolutely necessary. It was like that day he dreamed a bungalow on paper, where they would go and "rough it." "But," she had said, "some architect could do that, Frank, so much better than you! No servants' rooms? How could we live?"

Frank gave her his agreement, and she signed it, feeling foolish meanwhile.

"You silly boy!" she said.

"That," he said, "will remove all cause for complaint, if I should come to



"I came out to warn you. I hope you can take care of yourself."

love mother's lovely typist!" Then, he, too, signed his name, and shoved the little slip into a vest pocket, after which he took both Louise's hands in the new, masterful way, and said, "Love me?"

"Of course!"

"Say it," he said. His chin was rather set. Louise said it. Frank kissed her.

"Don't!" she begged.

"What did you say, fair princess?"

"I said *please* don't."

Louise's request had no effect. She struggled up, angry, all her dignity on the defense.

"I don't like you when you're like that!" she said, and went into the house.

Frank laughed.

Amy, who had stepped out on to the porch in time to see the last embrace, sat down before her typewriter, her knees shaking.

He cared for her, very evidently. How hideous it all was—how hideous!

That night Frank decided fully on the plan. He outlined it all carefully and, as mentioned before, ended his day

with a laugh, the laugh that belonged to the bad-tempered Langstroths, when in their worst temper. He thought he would not have much trouble with Amy. She seemed a soft little thing, and, of course, his offer would dazzle her. And how it would annoy the family! He wanted to hurt, hurt, hurt—hurt every one he could, and as much as possible! But, if he could first fix Louise and Proctor—

CHAPTER IX.

The following week began Amy's work for Frank and the most amazing series of events. It was impossible to ignore the fact that Frank courted her society. Joseph saw it and grew morose; Amy saw it and trembled; the servants saw it and talked; and Alice saw it and hoped it would bring Louise to terms. She spoke of it in entire confidence to a good friend of Louise's, who, Alice knew, would send the news to headquarters by the next post. Mrs. Langstroth was too engaged with clubs

and civic affairs to see anything but her own opinions and the fleeting of time.

Joseph, having walled himself behind the lighter everyday, broke through this wall to talk to Amy. He had seen her eyes as she looked after Frank. Their expression had kept him awake that night, for now he understood with a deadly certainty why she would not change. So, after he had grown somewhat used to his pain, he turned to her and tried to plan how he could stop its going deeper. Frank, he felt, might be so flattered by her admiration as to enjoy her discomfort. He found her alone on the beach one day and he went up to her, his heart pounding and his throat dry and stiff.

"I want to talk a little while," he entreated. "Please, can't we walk down the beach? The crowd——"

The beach was very gay that morning. For several days the danger flag had floated in the breeze and only the daring had braved the high-tossing waves. To-day, a good bathing one, brought every one out.

Amy and Joseph threaded through the throng. Sinking in the sand made going slow. Down the beach a little way, Joseph threw down a cravenette coat. Amy sat down and he followed suit.

"Well?" she said, looking at him bravely.

"It's Frank," he burst out, without preface. "I saw you look at him the other day when he started out to play tennis with the crowd, and—I knew."

"Well?" she said again, and again inquiringly. She had colored as he spoke, but the color quickly left, leaving her more pale than usual.

"In his crowd," Joseph continued, "well, it's hard to say, but those fellows don't always play square. I came out to warn you. I hope you can take care of yourself."

"I have for several years, and I think I understand this case, but it is dear and like you, Joseph, to try to help me."

"I can't let him hurt you!"

"He won't any more than he has," she answered, standing up. "And it wasn't his fault, it was mine. I've done lots here I would give—anything—to undo."

"Am I in on that?"

"First."

"Then don't feel that way," he answered gently, blinking down at her, "for although it hurts damnably, it's been, and is, wonderful—dear!"

"I'm not hurting you by staying?" she asked.

"Oh, no! I'm going to be a ripping friend. Try me! Really, Amy."

"I have tried you, and you are. Joseph, pain is horrible, and by it you've missed lots, but—how much it has given you that your brother has entirely missed! It is a cleanser."

"I suppose there must be some reason for it," answered Joseph.

They turned, and began to walk after that, and Amy saw that he limped heavily. Evidently it was one of his bad days.

Joseph first encountered Frank alone, that evening. It was in the little lull before dinner, the one, faint chance for quiet. Frank, sprawling limply in a huge, deep chair, looked up lazily as his brother entered.

"Lo," he grunted.

Joseph nodded. Then he lit a cigarette—he did not often smoke—and tried to say casually:

"I've been looking for you—wanted a little talk."

"That so? Well, shoot!"

Joseph sat down awkwardly, his stiffness showing markedly with the move, and Frank's eyes softened.

"How have you been lately?" he asked.

"Oh—all right," answered Joseph gruffly. "Have my bad days every once in a while. Every one does. I wanted—that is, have you noticed mother's secretary?"

"Noticed her? Lord, I'm not blind!

She's working for me, and then—she's the kind you have to see! Devilish pretty girl! But no pep. I've tried to make her talk, but she won't. And yuh know—funny thing!—but that sort of fascinates a chap. Some night I'm going to take her motoring and——"

"You are *not*!" said Joseph, the hand that held a cigarette shaking dangerously.

"Well, I'll be damned. What in—— Well, I *will* be——"

"She—she's a nice girl!"

"Didn't say she wasn't. But my soul! Will a little drive in the moonlight hurt her? I'm not a villain! You been indulging in movies lately?"

Joseph didn't answer.

Frank surveyed him quizzically and then rose. His attitude, as he stood, back to the huge fireplace, was a bit dramatic.

"It may interest you to know," he said oratorically, "that my intentions are what are called, in certain segments of society, 'entirely honorable.' I am going to marry the young woman."

"My God! Frank!"

Frank very evidently enjoyed the effect his words had caused.

"Is that all you have to say about it?" he inquired. "But then—I don't expect the family to be pleased!"

"She's too good for you!"

"What!"

"I said she was too good for you."

"Possibly so," replied Frank, "but, in a way, the marriage will be a condescension on my part."

"Suppose she won't have you?" said Joseph. "She wouldn't, if she thought you felt that way."

"She won't know I feel that way," answered Frank, affectionate eyes on Joseph. "You never can double cross, and she will have me. Why, thunder, man! Look at the chance it means to her!"

"What about—Louise? I—every one thought it was all Louise with you!"

Frank laughed.

"Louise?" he said with a rising inflection. "Louise——" He tossed a cigarette into the grate. The motion showed what he thought about Louise, and disposed of her, and then, shrugging his shoulders, he turned to see who had stepped into the room.

It was the pretty secretary, come to hunt an elusive quotation for Alice. Alice wanted something different, about poetry, to insert in a letter of thanks for a book of Joyce Kilmer's verse.

"Excuse me," said Amy. "Am I interrupting?"

"No," answered Frank genially. "Come in. What are you looking for?"

She told him, and he went with her to the shelves, reaching for the high books and talking a rapid fire of surface talk that he had learned from touch with many people—on the surface. When he found what Amy wanted, he was amused to see that her fingers shook as she turned the book's pages. Teaching her to care would not, he decided, be difficult. Gad, she was a little beauty!

"You should always wear a little yellow lawn—is it lawn?—frock with white collars and cuffs," he said.

Amy did not answer, but she looked across the room at Joseph, with appeal in her eyes, and he smiled at her stiffly, but reassuringly. He was wondering, as he smiled, whether he would ever come to callousness on this subject, and praying, through a throbbing pain, that he would!

After she left, Frank again came to stand before the fireless fireplace and survey Joseph.

"I think," he confided with a smile, "that the little girl will grow to care for me. That kind do, you know. It rather goes with marriage for them."

"You cad!" said Joseph, standing up. "You and your rotten, two-cent estimate of—of decency, you—I can't say what I'd like to, but I hope to God you

get what you deserve, you——" He stopped speaking, and finished by glaring at his brother.

"Well, I'll be——" began Frank, in utter bafflement, but he stopped speaking as his mother entered, with the rector of the little, near-by village church in tow. Joseph somewhat recovered himself, bowed stiffly, and withdrew.

Frank sat down with the rest and wondered, as they talked, why women so adored clerical clothes and would chase them, no matter what they covered. And then, he thought of Amy with a pleased smile. He outlined a plan, concerning her, and then his thoughts switched and grew bitter. He gloated over the suffering that was to come to Louise. He knew for a certainty that certain investments of Proctor Matlack's would fail in a short time. He also knew that Louise's interest would not stand that blow, for a glimpse of her, caught through tall, straight fir trees, had given him true sight.

CHAPTER X.

It was only ten days after that talk in the library that Frank asked Amy Marsh to marry him and Amy said she would. His proposal came abruptly—after a dictated letter about some timberlands in Oregon. They had been in the small room that was called "the office."

"Look here," said Frank. "I want to speak to you for a few moments. I say, do you dislike me?"

Amy's color faded.

"No," she answered, as she looked down at her pencil and the pad covered with her shorthand.

"Well, then," he said, "I suppose you've noticed that I've paid you some attention? I—I wonder whether you could stand me—as a husband?"

Amy looked up, and Frank almost turned away from the light in her eyes.

"I thought you cared for Miss Corliss," she said bravely.

Frank's face grew angry, but he answered with steady voice.

"I thought so, too," he replied, "but—I am asking you to marry me. Does it look as if she were the girl?"

"No. I'm glad you don't care for her."

"And why?" Frank was smiling. The whole affair was really too ridiculous.

"Because I don't think she's worthy of you—nor am I, but—I love you!" and then Amy again looked down and Frank swallowed hard.

A new sensation, shame, surged through him and weighted his soul. He'd make it up, he thought uneasily, by giving her lots she'd lacked, and he could pretend the rest—that was easily done.

"Why do you think I'm worth loving?" he heard himself ask.

"I think you'd be a splendid man if you controlled your temper, and weren't ashamed to acknowledge ideals."

"What makes you think that?"

"Oh," she answered, "I've seen things! Kindnesses of which you were ashamed, done when you thought no one would know. Your supporting that caddy who was run over by the Beames' motor"—Frank flushed—"your tenderness to your old nurse, whom you enable to live so comfortably. I called on her with Mrs. Howell one day. Things like your keeping your old saddle horse, that you feel foolish about—I love, for they show the you, which, although stifled, still lives. I——" Amy faltered, and then went on gravely. "I began to love you the day an old lady showed me a gorgeous, heart-shaped box that a man whom she'd cared for as a boy, gave her on Valentine's day. 'It had elegant bonbons in it, miss,' she said, 'and in two of the cases was gold pieces. He's like that, miss—generous and loving—but he don't want no one to know.'"

Frank moved quickly, as if to disclaim this. He started to speak, but, be-

fore he did, Amy put a pertinent question.

"What will your people think?"

"They'll disapprove," said Frank, stung to truth from her touch of it.

"So do I," said Amy. "I think it's a very bad plan, but I'm going to—if you really want me to. I'm going to try—to keep you from being sorry, too."

And then Frank kissed her.

"I thank you," he said gravely. "I'll try, too. At least, I can give you money—ease," he ended, looking down at her.

"You'll give me more than that," said Amy, and she laid her face against his sleeve for a short second, after which she began to type furiously—a letter about some timberlands in Oregon.

Frank, without a backward look, hurried from the room. Outside, he mopped his brow. "It had to be done," he thought. "I had to even up, but I hadn't dreamed it would be—quite so serious a matter."

Alone, Amy wrote one word three times and another not at all, and then she stopped and stared down at her typewriter. The world was whirling and gorgeously unsteady. All cool reasoning had tottered before the advent of the little person who carries arrows and wears wings in all seasons; all steady beliefs had become as autumn leaves in a strong west wind.

"I hope they will not hate me," thought Amy. She was thinking of the loud-voiced, wrangling family, for whom she had, in a queer way, come to care. They were pathetic in spite of great assurance; Alice, missing interest in her affairs and home petting; Mrs. Langstroth, in spite of a pretended independence and full life, wanting most desperately the love of her sons and daughter; Frank, living from day to day in a surface manner, and being roused to action only by temper clashes with some one else. Joseph, alone, was seemingly content. He had hobbies which never failed him, and which kept

him, for the most part, independent of people, their social games, or their love.

Amy took out the crippled letter, and wondered whether she might go upstairs without going to Mrs. Langstroth for orders. She felt as if she must be alone. With a guilty feeling and a light tread, she hurried away from her work and up the broad stair. At the head, she saw that Alice's door was open and through this she was hailed.

"Come in," said Alice. "I have a frock I want you to see—there on the bed. Now, I ask you, was the woman insane? How *could* I wear that color? Sit down, Amy."

Amy sat.

"Raining, isn't it? How utterly tiresome! And the Siefferts' drive is always ten leagues deep in mud. So depressing! My dear, will you have time to do some work for me this afternoon?" Then, quite irrelevantly, "How do I look?"

"Beautiful! Really, you do!"

"You're the greatest comfort," said Alice, adding powder to her already powdered nose. "One never can believe one's maid. They'd be dismissed if they were truthful; and then, one likes a more intelligent appreciation. You know, a girl needs it, and mother never gave it to me. She thought it would spoil me, I suppose, but, instead, the lack of it almost has. We've been brought up on the Spartan principle. I'll be grateful for that work. I must be off—good-by."

Amy left and Alice started down the stair. Halfway down, she encountered Frank.

"May I speak to you a moment?" he asked. "I want to—I've something to tell you."

"You'll have to hurry," said Alice. "Upstairs? Why can't we go to the library?"

"I'd rather go back to your sitting room, if you're willing."

"Very well," said Alice.

And, in her room, Frank told of the morning's happening.

"What!" said Alice. "You mean you're seriously going to marry her?"

"You said any one would be more acceptable than Louise," said Frank. He was beginning to enjoy himself.

"You don't love her," said Alice.

Frank stared.

"She's a very dear child," went on Alice heatedly. "In the last two weeks I've come to care *lots* for her. You remember that morning I came in from the Blakefields', so ill from the sun and too much dancing the night before, and too much eating—and no one knows what not? Well, she took care of me, and ever since—I've called her Amy, treated her less like a machine and more like a human, and found her a very loving one. I think our rating of people has been stodgy. She is well educated, Frank. And I imagine her family was at least respectable. Are you doing this to hurt Louise?"

"What difference does that make to you?"

"It makes this difference; I think it's cruel to hurt Amy—for you will! And she has a head and she will see through you. Why, my dear, she actually reads things, not because they are being read, but because she *likes* to! Joseph admires her just as I do, I'm sure. It's getting late; if you have anything more to say, say it, Frank."

"I'm going to be good to her," he heard himself say.

"If you are, I approve."

"Thank you, Alice. I suppose mother won't."

"I'll start her on her own large feeling of social democracy, to-night at dinner. Then, you can spring this."

"Are we to be alone?"

"Jimmy Percival's coming in to play cards, but he won't sense anything."

"Had his yearly thought last week, didn't he? Well—then, all right. And I can depend on you for help?"

"Absolutely, Frank. I do approve. I've changed lots lately—she's made it. And, my dear, when I help her select frocks, she'll be a new person."

Frank held out a hand and Alice took it. And then she went down the stairs, feeling something of the sweetness of the family harmony which she had missed.

On the way to the luncheon, she made herself even more late by doing something pleasantly kind. She ordered some adorably pretty baby roses, and on her card wrote a message, characteristic in its abrupt mixture. It read:

Frank has told me. I'm so glad! *Nothing could please me more!* If you get time, look over the *Atlantic* and write down some short talking points.

When Amy got these, she was confronting a perfectly good luncheon, which was going to waste. Food, even the daintiest, seemed so material a thing, and not at all a proper adjunct for pink clouds and Utopia-scented breezes.

Amy gazed down at the little rosebuds for a long time, and pondered Alice's message. She had always dreamed of having flowers sent to her, and these were the first. And she had not dared hope for such kindness from Alice! She decided, with a little catch in her throat that came from the too-quick swelling of her heart, that she was the happiest girl on earth. And then she closed her eyes. When she did this, she asked God, in a very conversational way, to make her large enough for the new job. She had confided in, and asked help of the Divine in this manner, for many years. One has to have some prop for that wavering thing—the human soul.

CHAPTER XI.

"I have but thirty-three minutes," said Mrs. Langstroth, on the morning following the betrothal, "before my daily work begins. Sit down, Miss Marsh. I want to speak to you seriously. At

heart, I am a social democrat, but, in spite of my great largeness, I do not see the advantage of the mixings of class. I do not feel that this can be done happily. Of course, we are one great family, that I acknowledge, and, while I quite agree with John Marx—wasn't it John?"

"Karl," supplied Amy.

"Well, it makes no difference—although now that I recall, the name is John—of that I am sure! What I was going to say is, that I agree at heart that there are no differences in people, but—ah—but—"

"I feel quite as you do," said Amy. "The differences in the manner of living are apt to destroy smooth loving, and once I thought I should never venture a change, but—"

"Twenty-nine minutes," said Mrs. Langstroth, inspecting a wrist watch. "But—what?"

"But I love your son so much that I—I can't remember to be sane!"

Mrs. Langstroth looked, decided that she saw sincerity, and softened. Frank was her favorite; Louise had never in the least appreciated him. Here, at least, was the proper homage.

"Who was your mother?" she said, surveying Amy through her lorgnette.

"Cecile Granden," responded Amy. "Her mother was French."

"Any relation to the Grandens who lived down near Trinity Church in the early days? I suppose not. Exceedingly good family, that! I went to school with a Cecile Granden of that family."

"She was the one," said Amy meekly.

"Oh!" said Mrs. Langstroth, tapping her lorgnette on her open palm. Then, somewhat recovering her lost balance, she inspected her watch. "I have but eighteen minutes," she announced, not quite as brusquely as usual. "What you say surprises me, and yet, as I have constantly said, you have a manner! It shows—it shows! Ring for Humphries. It will give me great pleasure to intro-

duce you to my friends as the daughter of one of my dear friends. How you look like her, but for coloring! Why did you conceal your parentage? And, my dear, how did you come to do typing? Humphries, the closed car, and see that there is no dust. The last time the condition was incredible! Did Frank know of your connection?"

"No," said Amy. "I think he took a chance." Her eyes twinkled.

"Ten minutes," said Mrs. Langstroth, standing up. "I am very happy over this! I have championed you all along, my dear. You may kiss me. Is my hat on straight? There!"

She made a ponderous exit.

Frank entered, frowning. Like Jo, the idea of his mother's "sailing into" Amy had left him decidedly nervous.

"How are you?" he demanded, looking at her for traces of the late fray.

"Quite well, thank you."

He sat down opposite her and took a tablet and pencil out of her hands.

"These go," he said.

"They gave me something to play with."

"Ah—how was mother this morning?"

Amy smiled at the man before her.

"You know, she believes in social democracy," said Amy. Frank grinned. "But, in spite of this, I don't think she considered it wise, until she found that she'd known my mother. They went to school together. Mother must have been much more attractive than I, for I think it was her ticket that bought my way!"

"Um——" said Frank.

"Frankly, I suppose mother, having belonged to older New York, did it," went on Amy. "And to me, that sort of thing matters so little. It is wonderfully dear that you didn't care; that you asked me to marry you because you—you loved me, and never bothered about whether I came from the Bowery or Riverside Drive!"

Frank played with a tablet.

"I can't think why you do," said Amy, "but I think about your doing so—a lot!" She looked at him and gave to him the glory of her eyes.

Frank winced, and then he took up the burden and began his deceit. It was pretty hard, the game.

"I love you," he announced. His tone was about as tender as a telephone inquiry for information; but to Amy, the novice, it was entirely satisfying.

She held his hand against her cheek. Her eyes, vision filled, looked off across the rolling lawn toward the sea.

Frank, looking down at her, felt something new, which was decidedly like an ache, begin to grow inside. She was little, soft, and pretty. And she cared for him! She must never know, never! While he, absolutely worthless, cared for a being who would fitly share his company, and not for *this* girl—who was really worthy of devotion.

"Let's go riding," said Frank. "It's so pretty this morning!"

"I'll get my sweater and hat," Amy said, and went into the house.

"I love this so," said she, as she reappeared. "Going off with you is such fun!"

"Where are we going?" he asked.

"I am going to Arcady," said Amy. "I don't know where you are!"

"I am going where you go," said Frank, which, under the restraining pressure of his feelings, was not bad. Amy talked during the ride, and she was very gay. After they had had lunch in a little wayside inn, sitting over it a long time and laughing a good deal, Frank spoke of his new discovery.

"You're a peach of a fellow to have a good time with!" he said. "Amy, you have a real sense of humor!"

"I've needed it!" she answered.

"You'll need it more now," he asserted with unmistakable meaning.

"Oh, not so bad as all that," she murmured, and stretched a hand across the

table. Frank patted it, but her fingers closed tightly around his in a dear, straightforward pressure. "I love you so!" she announced without the least self-consciousness. "Why, Frank, dear, I did, even when you cared for Miss Corliss—wasn't that hideous of me? But, I couldn't help it; that's the way of the stuff, isn't it? But—I'm so glad that I can tell of it now! If it's bottled, it hurts, but if you let it out, it's wonderful!"

"Yes," said Frank.

And then they talked plans. Amy was delighted here. She had enough romance in her nature to dare to dream aloud. Frank followed her lead without making very many slips.

"I like you, too!" she said, after they had disposed of a desert island with hot and cold water on it, and meals sent in from the club. "You know, liking and the other are quite different, and I am so glad to have a mixture. Wouldn't it be terrible to have to depend on kisses before breakfast!"

"I rather guess I like *you*!" blurted out Frank. "I do more—every second. I *wish* I could make you understand!"

"What?" she asked wistfully.

Frank hesitated.

"My beastly temper," he answered. "You know, I've never said I was sorry in my life? Lots of times I *have* been, but I've never said so. Honestly, I can't! If I'm a perfect brute, and can't tell you I know it, how are you going to stand it?"

"We'll buy a phonograph record. I think there is a beautiful song entitled: 'I'm Sorry I Made You Cry.' I'll run that on occasion. I wish I could have one more little cake with pink icing!"

"You can have dozens," said Frank. And then: "You're quite different from any one else I've ever known, Amy. I've enjoyed to-day more than you can dream. Have you?" He was ashamed of the addition. He hated her frank confidences about her feelings.



It was, to him,
the end of life.

"Have I?" she echoed. "Oh, no! I've been frightfully bored. Frightfully so!" And then, laughing, they stood up.

Frank thought a good deal about the wisdom of "going through with it." The revenge idea somewhat faded, the hurt of Amy overshadowing it. But, after all, how could he tell her; and need she ever know; and would anything more substantial in the way of affection ever come to him? Surely, he was quite unfit for her, but she cared.

Louise had been cruel, and, through Amy, he could be. And so his thoughts tangled and twisted, like a country road which brings one back to the starting point, after miles of going.

CHAPTER XII.

If the wedding had been large, if it had been heralded by invitations, instead of followed by announcements, Louise wouldn't have written Frank—and Frank wouldn't have written Louise. But, the simplicity and quiet of the affair, combined with Louise's feminine

clutch, started all of the hideous trouble.

Louise had smiled at tales. She was very sure of Frank. People talked, but gossip was never to be trusted. But then, more people talked, and the stories grew more positive. So and so had seen Frank lunching at the Red Cock with a beautiful yellow-haired girl; some one had seen them walking on the beach that week when the moon was so wonderful; a third person reported that they were together, going somewhere, every day; and a fourth warned Louise of trouble in a malicious, sweet tone.

Proctor Matlack had long faded from her life and gone to buzz around another flower. And his affairs, it was said, were in frightful shape, which was strange, for he invested through Frank Langstroth's broker, and Frank's money never took the wrong road.

Louise took heed and she wrote Frank, who got the letter two hours after he had changed Amy Marsh to Mrs. Langstroth, junior. It had been a very quiet and pretty little wedding, and, after it, had come a lunch at which the family endeavored not to be natural.

After which, Amy had gone upstairs and Alice had followed, and Frank had gone off to get into tweeds. They were going north in a motor. He found the note on the bureau, and turned white when he saw the writing. And he turned even more white as he read the note. Then, he sat down suddenly, staring at the sheet of paper, after which he went, rather unsteadily, to a wide-topped desk, and sat down before it.

He addressed an envelope to Louise quite firmly, considering his shaken mind and heart, and then—with shaking hand, poured out his soul on paper. It was all a mistake—he had been mad! He loved only Louise, would never love any one but Louise. She—she alone, would be the woman for him! He had known it always, but he had thought—here a page and a half of explanations, fol-

lowed by humble entreating for forgiveness. He loved her—a page of this, followed by a frank confession of why he had married Amy. And then, the end of his note—passionate, ringing of true love and absolute hopelessness, for it was, to him, the end of life.

In the middle of his note, Joseph pounded on his door.

"Your wife is waiting to go on a honeymoon," he announced in a voice that was too feignedly full of cheer.

"Be down in a minute," said Frank, and then he laid his face down on his letter, and, for a moment, gave way.

Amy and Frank drove off in silence. Amy looked up at him and then decided that talk would not be well. And so, she was quiet, enjoying the sliding scenery and the wonderful, thrilling consciousness of being Mrs. Langstroth.

"Are you comfortable?" asked Frank, after a half hour of quiet.

"Oh, yes," answered Amy. She slid a hand into his. Frank hated himself, but he felt a great comfort from her warm, small hand. She was a better comrade than Louise. If only love—love had been there! He closed his eyes suddenly, the pain of loss assailing him anew.

"You have a headache," said Amy.

"A little one," admitted Frank. Perhaps that would help him pull through it; she mustn't suspect, she was a dear little thing. He cared a lot for her—in a way. But what he could have given Louise—Louise, who wanted it! "All that you could give me, and more, would not be enough!" came back from the body of her letter. And that—that chance was gone!

"I am going to try to make you happy," he announced to Amy. It was made in a platform manner, this assertion. It pleased Amy's sense of humor.

"I thank you, kind sir," she answered.

"Why, you little devil!" said Frank, turning to her and, for the moment, forgetting his heartbreak.

"Your mother told me just how to make you happy," said Amy. "I am not to let you be too sure of my love"—she squeezed his hand—"for a man is always fascinated by the chase. I think I'm going to ask you to give me a track for next Christmas. One of those slanting ones—like that affair at Indianapolis, isn't it? I have a picture of the happy family keeping interest alive by using this from two to four daily."

"Do you always act like this on honeymoons?"

"Not always, but nearly," she answered foolishly, but her eyes were tender. "Your head?" she questioned.

"Oh, better."

"I'm so glad!" She laid her cheek against his shoulder, and they were silent for some distance. Then, "What a wonderful day!" she said softly. "I can't realize—this. I'm afraid that I'll wake up—and that it will all be gone. I can't believe it!"

"It's true enough," answered Frank.

And then, he thought of the great injustice he was doing the girl beside him, and of another one, whom he loved, and who said she loved him. That thought made the tears start to his eyes. Amy saw them, mistook their cause, and they opened the gates of heaven for her.

"Please kiss me!" she said unsteadily.

Frank found marriage with Amy a remarkably easy thing. She never asked him where he'd been, and he found himself doing that at which he had so often scoffed—pouring his affairs, business or otherwise, into her wonderful listening. She never felt abused by his long silences or absorbed news reading. She never ceased thinking the new life a wonderful thing. She had been alone and too often lonely for long, and, because of this, Frank's consideration and thought for her never seemed lacking.

Summer faded and then came the move to town, where they took up residence. Amy selected furniture for the new house and made decisions concerning just what they wanted in color, shape, and texture. Alice helped, and was amazed at Amy's taste. Frank, who had first advocated a decorator, who was perfect in taste, but lacking in feeling, began to think that Amy's viewpoint was the better, and that a homemade home, even when it showed a faulty sense of beauty, was better than a ready-made one that didn't fit the owner.

And, when he inspected the changes from day to day, he wondered whether he had quite understood the depth of his wife. He began to talk more and read the papers less. And he found the new régime exceedingly happy. He reminded himself that he had known she was corkingly good company, and yet, he hadn't known that her interests were so varied and so energetic. His broken heart received less attention and his life lost the blasted hue. Once, he went for five days without thinking of Louise. And then he thought of her and apologized to her image. She was still pedestaled in his heart. Her note and his absurd passion had kept her on it. His passion was moving into a new and really beautiful dwelling place, but he did not sense it. He only felt that the weather was bully, and that New York was a great place, and that his wife was a splendid little pal.

He came into her room one morning and found her deep in "Helen of Troy and Rose." She had on a soft negligee, and her hair had been abandoned for the pleasures that only a true genius can give.

"Well?" he said, looking down at her and smiling.

"It's so wonderful!" she said. "If I go to heaven, there will be a new Phyllis Bottome book every day! And Frank, I can never get over the luxury

of ordering any book I want! I love that much more than buying new frocks! I used to hate the smell of library books."

Frank sat down on a chaise longue and lit a cigarette.

"I've just telephoned, and I hear that the piano's in," he said. "Let's go up and see the place this afternoon, shall we?"

"Yes," agreed Amy. "Let's, and have tea there. Alice is coming to go shopping with me. Suppose we meet at about four?"

"Great!" said Frank.

"It will be lovely to have a really home, won't it?" said Amy. "I don't like hotels, even the best."

"I don't either, but generally women do. Has Alice got a maid for you?"

"Yes, I believe she's to appear soon. I don't know what I'll do with her. I'm so used to doing things for myself. I am learning to dress, am I not?"

Frank inspected her. "Yes," he admitted, and then, getting up, he started off.

Amy thought, with a good deal of pleasure, of the first party in the new house. She made elaborate plans and telephoned the maids, who were now helping to reduce the chaos. She wanted French pastries and hot scones, and the sort of tea Alice liked. And she arranged it before she went down to the lobby of the great hotel, where she was to meet Joseph—a Joseph who was firmly intrenched, and quite happily himself, behind his hobbies.

"You'll be out of this pretty soon," he said, after greetings. "You care a lot about quiet and home, don't you?"

"Lots," she admitted, as her eyes took in the hurrying crowds, and her ears were filled with their endless chatter. "You must have dinner with us the first night we're there," she said. "I want you."

"Will Frank?" inquired Joseph, somewhat quizzically.

"Oh, my dear!" Amy said. "Imagine Frank sentimental! It isn't in him! I have to display it for every one. How is mother to-day?"

"Full of the horror of fleeting time. Let's go eat!"

CHAPTER XIII.

Frank started for the house in a bad temper. He had returned to the Giltmore to have lunch with his wife, and he had missed her. He found, on inquiry, that she had lunched at an early hour with his brother. That vaguely annoyed him. He couldn't tell quite why, perhaps because he had awfully wanted to see her. The wait until four seemed a long one. He had lunch. The slowness of the service annoyed him still further, and then he went upstairs and sat for a few minutes smoking and allowing himself to paint his feelings sentimentally with a dreary gray. He deliberately thought of Louise and of the note. That he enjoyed; when he thought of his reply, he felt sick. He hoped fervently she had destroyed it, but, of course, she had. No girl would save a thing like that. Then he picked up a book with one of Amy's handkerchiefs marking the place where her reading had stopped, thought very genuinely and somewhat tenderly of her, and his good humor was, in part, restored.

Some business and a few telephone calls, and it was four and a little after, and he hurried off to have tea and, as Amy put it, christen the new piano. He hurried up the steps. A maid whom he had not before seen let him in.

Some one was playing the new piano, and he thought divinely. For feeling, much of it, covered what lacks there were in technique. He stepped to a wide-open door and saw that it was Amy. It irritated him profoundly that he had not known she could play. One of the littlest human emotions, jealousy for self-importance, attacked him. Why had not Amy told him of her accom-

plishments? Why should Alice hear her play before *he* did?

Alice heightened it by seeing him and exclaiming:

"Doesn't she play well, Frank? She says she's never played for you. I don't think she even knew you cared for music!"

"He wouldn't go to hear Sergei Rachmaninoff," said Amy, defending herself. "I didn't know you cared so much for music, Frank, and, if I believed it, I surely wouldn't play for you!"

"I should think it would be natural to tell *me* you played—before you confided in the world," said Frank. He sat down, a stiff, unpleasant look about his mouth.

"Go on," he ordered, and sat listening. She hadn't told any of them of her connection with the old New York family, and Lord! how his mother *had* rubbed in social differences! Had she enjoyed it? And here was this.

"May I ask *why* you didn't play for us at Southampton?" asked Frank.

Alice was annoyed. It was really too little of Frank, she thought, and Amy was such a darling!

"Nobody asked me, sir, she said," answered Amy. "Next time people omit this, I shall run up and fall on the piano with firm intention. It shall not escape me."

Frank did not smile; Alice laughed uncomfortably; and then tea came in.

"Isn't this fun!" said Amy. But she did not feel that it was.

There is no especial pleasure in confronting an absolutely glum and glaring husband, who is annoyed by wit, and who won't play up before the neighbors. Amy had an innate wish for doing all the laundering in private; Frank's temper and the Langstroth training imposed no such restrictions on him.

"Damned weak," he remarked, after the first mouthful of tea. He set the cup down. His damning of it was final.

"Can't I have some more made for you?" asked Amy. "Or will you try a little of this after it's stood a moment?"

"No," said Frank. He gave the impression that the lost tea flavored the universe and sat stonily silent while Alice chattered and Amy interspersed comment. After a few more minutes, Alice went on, murmuring of an appointment that Amy knew she didn't have. And as she went, she made Frank rise to heights.

"It's so lovely!" she said, looking around. "I think Amy's done wonderfully! Aren't you happy over this, Frank?"

"No, I'm not! Stevens should have done it. For my own part, I don't care for this sort of thing," answered Frank, "but Amy had her way. I thought it better, for the sake of peace, to let it go. And Lord! I don't expect to be here much, anyway."

And then Alice went. Amy looked at her husband. He was, like the rest of them, just a child when he was angry. She realized it, but it didn't make the solution of her difficulty any easier. Fortunately her temper was almost negative, and so she waited. If he wanted to be mean, he could—that went with marriage. But—he couldn't before people; that she wouldn't have.

"Why didn't you teach music?" asked Frank.

"I really don't play well," answered Amy. "Some little feeling and typist's fingers, that's all."

"Then my judgment counts for nothing?"

"Not when you're in this mood," said Amy. She stood up, after that, and got into her coat. Frank did not help her. Silent, they rode toward the Giltmore. After an hour in their rooms, Amy gave up.

"Frank," she said, "I didn't mean to hurt you! Whatever I did was because I didn't understand. If you'll just tell

me, I'll be good." Frank would not meet her eyes. "How long is this to go on?" asked Amy. "It's so futile! I hate silence, Frank." Still Frank did not respond. Amy dropped her hands and picked up a book.

Her husband went out, stayed away an hour, and returned. He had a box of violets. Amy found them on her lap and looked up.

"You can't buy me off," she remarked. "You were frightfully unjust, Frank!"

He was silent some time longer, and then, with evident effort, he said:

"Remember what I told you about—my temper?"

Amy nodded. Then she stood up, and put her arms around his neck.

"Dear," she whispered, "I was a pig. I am sorry!"

"Darling!"

"But—I can't stand it *before people*, Frank."

"All right. I'll remember."

"You can when we're alone, if you have to. But—I hate it, and I can't believe that it really helps you. Frank, I sing, too."

He laughed in a shamefaced way and tightened his arms.

"My range is about four full notes and three thin ones."

"Think you're having a very good time?" he inquired, and then he kissed her.

"Frank," she said, "there is something else. I once had two pet goldfish!"

"You are afraid of me, aren't you?" he said, laughing with her.

"Not a bit, when you're nice," she answered. "And I really am not, when you're nasty, but—I wish I big enough to spank you, then!"

He shook her gently and then released her.

"Don't ever let me really hurt you," he said. "Don't Amy, please!"

"You're so good to me all the time!" she replied. "I think I've been horrid! Where are those violets? Where did I

hurl them? I'm going to wear them at dinner to-night and think what an adoring husband I have. You are a perfect dear, Frank—a dear!"

A week after that, Frank had to make a hurried business trip to the West. He wanted to take Amy with him, but he found that Mrs. Langstroth, senior, had planned a little "at home," a select and chaste affair, at which her new daughter was to receive with her.

"It bores me, dear," said Amy. "You know, I appreciate it, but it does. I'd rather be with you—that you also know, but—she's been so good to me! I—am an interloper."

CHAPTER XIV.

Amy found herself decidedly lonely while her husband was away. Alice was unusually occupied. New frocks, with no one to look at them, failed to thrill. And long evenings almost took the hue of those that had been before the Langstroth entrance into her life. She wrote Frank of her dependence, almost showed him how much she cared for him—she had before rather sealed herself; his manner had made that—and worked feverishly on house arrangements.

Then, one evening, Joseph telephoned, asked whether she wouldn't go with him to see "Dear Brutus," and she accepted joyfully. She put on a very becoming black-lace-and-net frock, and went to the play. Joseph was charming.

After the theater they had something to eat, and then Joseph returned his new sister, properly refusing her invitation to come in, but reluctantly. Amy made her way upstairs, singing a small tune that had been favored by Mr. Gillette.

In the door of the drawing-room she stopped. Frank sat before the fire. Her eyes filled, as she went toward him, and her breath came quickly.

"My dear!" she whispered, "I've missed you *so*!"

"Really?" said Frank. He got up slowly, kissed her with great indifference, and then asked where she had been.

Amy's tears and color faded as she replied. Something leaden settled on her heart. She had had high dreams of Frank's return, and she had planned for it all during the week, which had seemed so long to the little girl who was, in a manner, in a new country.

Frank wandered off, after a yawn and a mention of weariness, and Amy went to her room. Her maid had not waited up for her, and she was glad to be alone. As she slipped from her frock, she wondered whether he was tiring of her. What a melodramatic thought! Of course he was tired! She wondered when he had got in, hated herself for not having been at home to meet him, and then thought that, since he hadn't telegraphed and had come a day ahead, he didn't care.

Still reasoning unhappily, she took down her hair.

Frank, in the adjoining room, was indulging in one of his silent rages. It was a pretty thing, he thought, to come home to a wife who pretended adoration and find her out—gadding! And Lord! How he'd looked forward to seeing her! Fatuous fool, he was!

He sank to a chair, lit a cigarette, and indulged in memories and morbid thought. Suppose Louise and he had been parted for a week—after barely more than six months of marriage! He allowed himself a dream.

And here was this girl, who feigned affection, as indifferent about his homecoming as Alice would have been. The smoke curled up above his head and he watched it through half-closed, sullen eyes. What had she had before her marriage to him? Had she been playing all the time? She was pretty enough to be a wonderful actress. If he thought that— His hand shook and he looked at it with some wonder.

It was Louise, of course, for whom he cared. Certainly no one else mattered.

He got up and went toward the room where Amy sat brushing her long hair.

"Quite a spectacular frock you wore to-night," he said, lounging against the doorway.

"Did you like it?"

"I did not, my dear. If I may be so bold as to say so—it wasn't in good form—looked like the costume for a Ziegfeld chorus—I'd—ah, rather not have it seen on you again. You're my wife, you know, my dear."

"Why, certainly, I know it," she answered, looking at him through a mirror, "and I won't wear it again, Frank." She felt tired and dejected, too tired to see his absurdity, far too humble to see its cause.

"But you're learning very fast," said Frank with condescension.

"My dear," said Amy sharply, "how perfectly absurd of you! Surely I haven't been used to just this sort of life, but I haven't come from the slums! Have I done anything especially horrible that's humiliated you?"

"Oh, well, don't let's speak of it to-night," said Frank with elaborate unconcern, as he looked down at his cigarette.

Amy set her teeth on her lower lip. For the second time in that evening, her eyes filled, this time quite a new emotion starting them. She was unused to anger.

Frank betook himself to his room to slip from this clothes and feel ashamed. He had seen the tears, and something much taller than Frank had leaped into larger growth at the sight of them. He wished he could tell her he was sorry—that he was a devilish cad—jealous of his own brother, of any one who looked at her, and that he was discovering what she meant to him—through that.

He formed two apologies and tried to feel himself saying them. But they would not come.

"Why," he groaned, "didn't mother teach us? Why were we allowed to think that the Langstroths were always right! I can't! I can't!"

And, after some unnecessary puttering, he went in to Amy, took her in his arms, and kissed her roughly. She was hurt, more hurt by that, and still he could not speak. He had never learned the language.

In the morning, Amy's manner was unhappily bright. She told Frank all about her small happenings for the one day she hadn't written, asked him much about the trip, and then saw him off at the door.

And then—the mail came. Amy picked out her letters, surveyed them with feminine wonder, and lingered over their opening. The last letter on the pile was in a strange, yellow envelope, and written in a Spencerian hand—copper-plate and without character. Amy opened this with speculation. When she read the first few lines, she frowned in wonder and then—came blinding understanding, and her color faded.

It was the letter Frank Langstroth had written to Louise Corliss, two hours after his wedding. With it was a roughly torn slip of paper, on which was written:

A young lady dropped this from her bag on Forty-fourth Street. I found it, and think you ought to know. WELL-WISHER.

Amy got up. She went to a room that was dazzling from the colors of many hanging frocks. From these she took three of the plainest and a few of the simplest underthings from a long row of drawers built in the wall. Then her suit case and the packing. She felt dizziness as she moved, but her thought was clear.

After she had packed a bag, she stood looking down at the letter. She decided to put it on his bureau. He would understand. She picked it up and, feeling a sudden and almost overwhelming sick-

ness, took it to the next room. She looked at the letter again.

How horrible, she thought suddenly, it had been for him—to find out—that—too late! She went to his desk and wrote a small line, her hand so unsteady that the letters tangled and blurred. She wrote:

I am sorry for you that it came too late! But I am going away. There's lots of work, I am sure, and perhaps she will not mind divorce. AMY.

And then she went from the room.

Wilkins accosted her in the hall.

"Shall I order the car, madam?" he asked, eyeing her bag.

Amy shook her head.

"But the bag?" he added. Her eyes were so childishly hurt—and the young man *was* a devil sometimes. Again Amy shook her head, and then hurried out.

Frank's day dragged. He telephoned Amy at about three o'clock and found that she was out. Then came some real business, which helped time slip, and then the time when he found himself whirling up the Avenue to the cross street where a heavy stone house, with grilled iron guarding the lower windows, meant home and—Amy.

He hurried upstairs and into his room.

"Hello!" he said with a smile. "Note on the pincushion. Said she never would do anything so banal. What——" His voice faded, as he read the note. Then he rang for a servant.

"Did Mrs. Langstroth go out in a motor?" he asked.

Mrs. Langstroth had not. Frank hoped the servant did not see the stiffness of his lips.

"Had she——" He stopped, cleared his throat, and then dismissed the man. Again he looked at the note. Then he telephoned Joseph.

"Joseph," he beseeched, "come up here. I need help—devilishly!"

In about thirty minutes Joseph appeared. He was jaunty, because he had just bought a marvelous South American butterfly and been so brutally Langstroth to the owner that he had knocked down the price to almost nothing.

"Cook left?" said Joseph, and then he ceased his humor. "Why, Frank," he demanded, "what's up?"

Frank motioned to a note.

"Go read it," he said. "I want to feel sick. I wish some one would beat me! God! What a damned brute I've been to her right along—last night, and now—she's left!"

"Who?" said Joseph, surveying the letter through his thick-lensed glasses.

"Amy."

"This isn't a letter to Amy, is it?"

"No, you—you damned fool! Can't you help me?"

Joseph did not reply. He was reading Frank's impassioned letter.

"So Amy saw this," he said. "Well, well. And Louise had to get the spite out of her system in some way, didn't she? Never trust 'em!"

"Louise?" queried Frank, looking up. His eyes were strained.

"Yes. Probably. Wanted to get even. You know, she didn't write that letter you got from her; Vera Joanan did. Proud of it, you know, and kinda blabbed it, and those things travel. Louise read it and said, 'My dear, how horrible!' You are an ass, Frank. You never deserved a girl like Amy!"

Joseph, having adjusted his sight to people, stopped.

"Why, Frank," he said gently, "you poor chap!"

But Frank, head in his arms, could not answer.

It took three days of real hunt to find Amy, for, although, to quote a certain sort of person, "the world is a small place," New York may be—if the hiding one wants to stay hid—a large one.

Frank found her in Miss Leicester's

boarding house. It was fish day and the house reeked of that and laundry soap, for the parlor curtains had very recently had a bath. Frank sat in a red plush and a pink-walled salon and glared at a Rogers group, while he awaited Amy.

She came in with head held high and an almost defiant expression. Frank could not speak. If he had done what he wanted to, hidden his face against her heart and broken down, she would have understood, and much trouble would have been saved; but Frank could not yet do that. He sat, exceedingly stiff of chin, and asked her what she was doing in this "damnable hole."

"I am living here," answered Amy. "It isn't really so frightful. We don't always have fish."

"You are coming back with me," said Frank, his voice too authoritative, simply because it threatened to break.

"Oh, no," replied Amy, "I am not."

"You're my wife."

Amy looked down at her hands.

"How much money have you?" demanded Frank.

"Thirteen dollars," said Amy. "It was mine. I saved it out of my salary which I earned from your mother, and I——"

"Don't!" whispered Frank.

And then they began to talk. Amy's stubbornness first amazed and then enraged Frank, and he left, after saying some things that kept him from sleep until very early the next morning.

And Amy retorted with some things which she remembered late that night, and which made her wake Mr. Willetts of the Bamberger Shoe Store, who roomed directly next.

Amy got a position in a law office, where a little man who wore white spats dictated "at" her. The technicalities bothered her and made her work, which was fortunate, as it stopped misery for some hours, at least.

Frank was not so fortunate.

CHAPTER XV.

The next month dragged by. Mrs. Langstroth hunted up Amy on a Saturday afternoon—the law took a rest then—and told her that she had only thirty-two minutes, but that she had come to say she understood, poor child, but that, after all, a “woman’s place was in the home,” and that Frank loved her.

Amy laughed unhappily at this.

“If he did,” she said, “Central Park, filled eight feet high with letters like that, couldn’t keep me from him. But he doesn’t. You see—I know, for even when I was an idiotic little believing fool, I felt underneath what was lacking.”

“My dear,” said Mrs. Langstroth, consulting her watch, “you are quite wrong. Quite wrong, I am sure! Mercy! Have I been here fifteen minutes? And it is causing talk! Poor Frank feels it horribly, I know.”

Amy didn’t reply.

“But we all believe that you’ll come back to him soon,” said Mrs. Langstroth. “And you will be welcomed, my dear. Welcomed! The other affair was just madness. Even my dear husband—But, my dear, I’ve spent twenty minutes here. I *must* go! Shall I tell Frank that he is forgiven?”

“No,” said Amy, in a way that made it indisputable.

“Very well, my dear,” said Mrs. Langstroth. “Very well! But this simply can’t go on!”

When the door had closed after her, Amy went up to her room and sat there looking out on a bare wall opposite. She counted the cracks between the bricks and then the chipping bricks, and then she did what she had firmly decided not to, and that was to read Frank’s last letter once more. He appealed rather more gently in this, and almost intimated that he had not always been a good husband. Amy lay down on the bed and held the letter against her cheek.

Alice had come to see her, Joseph had come to see her, and both of them continued to come occasionally; but Frank stopped.

“He loves you,” said Joseph, one day. It had taken real bravery. Amy did not speak of Frank or of anything near Frank, and the look she gave him silenced him entirely. She shook her head as she turned her face toward him.

“You care awfully, don’t you?” said Joseph, a longing for all he had missed assailing him.

Amy didn’t answer.

“You’ll have some tea with me,” he asked humbly, “if I’m very good?”

“That would be delightful!” she said. “It makes Saturday so festive to have tea. And it should be, you know—my day off!”

They turned into a little tea room.

For a week Amy hadn’t seen any of the Langstroths. Then, one Sunday morning, Joseph’s card was brought up to her. She had slept late and had to keep him waiting. When she did go down, she found him inspecting a “Battle of Gettysburg” that had belonged to Miss Leicester’s mother. It was a terrible affair, full of expiring horses and men and large glares of powder.

“Lovely thing!” said Joseph, as she entered. And then, “Go motoring with me? Bully day!”

But she refused gently. The world would not be kind, she knew; there was no use giving them food for gossip, and she had been seen with Joseph perhaps too often, as it was.

“Just been in to see Frank,” said Joseph, still inspecting the chromo. “He’s coming along nicely.”

“What—” began Amy.

“Didn’t you know? Really frightful cold! Threatened pneumonia. But he’s doing splendidly now. I thought perhaps if you were going by there, you might drop in. He’s—ah—spoken of you often.”

Amy moistened her lips.

"Is he—really safely through it?" she heard herself say.

"I hope so. But you can't tell. Colds are so uncertain."

"Why didn't you tell me?"

"Mother said she was going to."

"She didn't."

After a few more minutes, Joseph left and Amy went up to her room. She did not see how she could go, nor how she could stay away. After a half hour of torment, she got into her outer wraps and started out. She found herself shaking; told herself she was absurd. But the shaking did not stop. A child with a tray of violets went by, and she bought a tiny bunch. She found herself looking at them through a blur. There had been so many violets in those heavenly sweet, deceiving, first days—big-petaled, moist, earthy, sweet-smelling.

A bus came lurching along and she went up on top. The fresh air and the cold drew color to her cheeks, and the moving throng helped steady her. So many women in lovely motors—such as she had taken for granted, after a few months' possession. But how little a part of it that had been!

At last the corner, and then the few steps up the block and—the door. She had not known it would be quite so hard. She stopped, gasping, before she could ring. The door opened; an impassive servant almost gave way to expression, and then, suppressing it, admitted her.

Mr. Langstroth was in the morning room. Yes, she would go up. No, it wouldn't be necessary to announce her.

Frank got up suddenly as she came in. He held out his hands.

Amy stopped in the doorway.

"They said you were sick, and I thought I'd drop in," she announced almost shrilly, "to see how you were. May I—may I sit down?"

"Please!" said Frank. He was white, she decided, looking at him circum-

spectly. Perhaps he was not really on the way to health now. If he needed her— She closed her eyes. The room had been reeling.

"I brought you these," she said, holding out the violets. "They smell so beautifully *spring*, don't they? I think you'll be lots better when spring really does come, don't you? Have—have you been quite sick?"

"I don't know," he answered, as he took the violets and held them close to his face. "Could you play to me?" he said. "Just something soft and slippy. I've thought about your playing a lot—and wanted it."

Amy nodded and went to the little piano. She fumbled through a few things, and then she got up.

"I must go," she said. "Where are my gloves?" Frank got up, hunted for them, and gave them to her. "I hope you'll be really well soon," she said. "And—and—I'm sorry for—everything! I hope you'll be happy. I—I don't *want* you to feel bound to me. I want you to be happy! You deserve it. You—you paid me all you owed me. But"—her voice was shaking—"I'll write you about it."

Frank laid his hands on her shoulders and gave way. "Don't go!" he entreated brokenly. "Don't go! I can't let you! Amy—I am a brute, a devil, but I need you, I want you, I *love* you!"

For a moment, Amy did not respond, and then her arms went around his neck. After a few moments, he lifted his face.

"I'm sorry," he announced loudly. "Sorry, sorry, sorry!"

"Oh, what difference does that make!" said Amy. "But why didn't you *tell* me you cared? That is what makes women live through beatings and long for more! Oh, Frank—say it again—*please* say it!"

But he didn't. And he didn't have to; he was showing it.

And if, through happiness, the gates of heaven really open, angels envied men and things of earth!



On *the* Disappearing Uniform

By Virginia Middleton

Author of "Contrasts and the Psycho-Analysts," "Charms and Philters," etc.

NOW that we women are laying them off, let us consider uniforms. Weren't they ugly? Didn't we lose an opportunity? Wasn't our slavish imitation of the male—and our air of smug, sanctimonious satisfaction in the imitation—ridiculous, pathetic, and, above all, wasteful? What an opportunity war gave us—and how we let it go for nothing and worse than nothing! We prophesied a uniformed world forever, and behold! Hasn't every war worker put away her khaki or her blue serge, her shapeless, round-toed shoes, her jackets with all the belts and pockets and crisscrossery which defied nature and pretended that the female form divine was a rigid rectangle—hasn't she put them all way—together with the round-crowned felt hats that should never surmount a face of more than eighteen summers? And hasn't she gone out posthaste to buy all the most varied, the least standardized clothes in the world? Why?

Two years ago every woman who had achieved the right to wear a uniform was wedded to it, and every other woman envied her. The fortunate one could discourse by the hour on the joys of not "dressing." She looked with pity, tempered with disdain, upon those whose war work did not entitle them to wear the ugly garb in which she took such satisfaction. She was perfectly willing to appear at the theater in her neat blue or her khaki or her smoke gray, with her high-collared blouse and

her good, sensible tan shoes. By day, she would walk into the gayest restaurant which the war had left and would seat herself with more pride in her attire than was felt by any self-advertising actress in a clinging velvet frock and a picture hat.

She was a little self-conscious, the uniformed woman, of course, but there was no shamefacedness about her self-consciousness. It was all pride, all naive conviction that the sartorial world held nothing more entirely desirable than the garb which she was wearing. And this, in spite of the fact that, as she looked around upon her associates in the uniform, she must have realized that it was ugly and unbecoming.

It was only the appearance of the uniform that was at fault, but appearance, unfortunately, is so much more potent than reason, in matters of dress. The arguments were all with it and its wearer.

There was the little item of expense. Of course, the uniform was not cheap, not when one had it made by a good tailor, and Heaven help one if one didn't! But it was of enduring fabric; it would not need to be changed in three months because a convention of masculine fashion authorities had decided that it was time for the clothing trades to make some more money. It could be worn from the moment one shed her bathrobe in the morning till the moment one slipped into it again at night. No foolish afternoon dresses were re-

quired, no luncheon costumes for even the most elaborate luncheons.

Apart from its general utility and its comparative cheapness, there was also the fact to be considered that it was a garb of honor. It meant that one was serving one's country, and, somehow, as every school-teacher, policeman, government clerk, letter carrier, and street cleaner has had occasion to observe, it is so much more distinguished to be serving one's country in the war than it is to be serving it in peace! The war worker at home wore her unadorned uniform with the pride that those who were fortunate enough to go abroad displayed when they came back with crosses and ribbons pinned all over it.

It was not only the garb of honor, it was the garb of safety, as well. Motor drivers in their khaki and their leather leggings drove their cars anywhere, into any sort of a crowd, into any sort of a neighborhood, and were sure of friendly treatment. Women in any of the war uniforms knew that they could go anywhere in them at any hour, and be sure of not only respectful treatment, but of kindly coöperation, as well. "Why, the roughest sort of men, even drunken men," declared one wearer of a uniform enthusiastically, "treat us with as much respect, almost, as if we were Sisters of Charity." Every one respected the intention, the presumed personality, behind the war uniform.

Then, too, it was to be an inspiration to the girls of the lower classes. Probably they weren't called lower classes in those days of the country's glorious unity, but, however that might be, it was felt by all the serious-minded ladies who embarked upon war work that their changelessness of attire, their paucity of adornment, was going to make a great impression upon the young workwomen.

These, the upper classes had always

felt, spent far too much of their earnings upon foolish, flimsy gauds, were almost criminally devoted to cobweb stockings, to champagne-colored shoe-tops, to sheer, pink blouses, and all the ephemera of dress. Well, they said, in the days of the uniform, when Becky Epstein and Mamie Flaherty learned that Mrs. John Jacob Vanastorbilt, to use the humorist's composite name for the type, was wearing one costume through the whole day and evening, and through the whole set of weeks and months, would not they be moved to imitation? They always had been imitative in the past.

"It really has been our fault, ladies," the speakers at War Workers' Simplified Dress meetings used to say, "that working girls have been so foolish and extravagant in dress. We have not set them a good example." And, having decided to set Becky and Mamie a good example, the war worker felt herself one of the most ennobling influences of the time, as well as one of the most sane—and all through her uniform.

Yet, in spite of all the arguments which she used to rehearse, she has fairly run to doff the single, simple livery which was her day dress, the advertisement of her patriotism, which was her protection in dangerous places and her agency of benignant influence. For one visit to the tailor's, twenty visits to twenty shops have been substituted. Eight costumes—hats, stockings, shoes, gloves, and furs for each—have taken the place of the one serge or gabardine, and, even with them, the ex-war worker finds, in a month, that she has nothing which is "just right" to wear to Ethel's tea or Jacqueline's studio dance! She hasn't, you observe, called her sisters throughout the country to a general convention to decide upon a peace-time uniform as useful as she found the war-time one to be.

It was their ugliness that was at the root of the brief life of uniforms. It

was their imitateness. They tried to be like men's. They succeeded, alas! in being far too like men's! That was their fatal error. With the single exception of the uniforms of the working members of the Women's Land Army—breeches, long smocks, and big straw hats—they were not becoming. And all the long litany of their virtues ceased to be chaunted when that one condemning fact became apparent even to the wearers of the uniform.

If only women, instead of rushing pell-mell into adaptations of masculine uniform, had proceeded to develop and standardize dress along feminine lines! They would almost have justified the whole World War—which nothing up to date *has* justified—and they would have given the blessing of that standardization, with all its conveniences, to their sex forever.

Of course, now that the uniform has disappeared, has died of its own sheer lack of originality and beauty, its recent wearers are talking—to speak in the vernacular—out of the other side of their mouths. They are prattling about individuality in dress, about the expression of each woman's ego. They must know, in their hearts, that they are talking nonsense.

Has the trained nurse less individuality in her stiff, starched white than she has in a haphazard selection of clothes from the various closets and counters in the department store? Why, who has not had the experience, when necessity has summoned a trained nurse to his house, of seeing a commonplace, indistinguishable, slipshod girl emerge into a charming, efficient, unforgettable woman by the mere shifting from her "civies" into her uniform?

And who will say that the young man in badly selected mufti, lounging along the Avenue with his friend, is a more individualized figure than he was last year in khaki? For that matter, does any woman who declares that she

will never wear a uniform because it would dim her individuality, really think that she has less of that desirable attribute when she is clad in her night-dress, one of not less than ten thousand of exactly the same sort, than when she has allowed her fancy free range among fifty-seven varieties of blouse and scarf?

No, there's everything in the world to be said in favor of the uniform, except that, when we had the chance to wear it, we women, we didn't use our opportunities, we didn't use our own distinctive talents, we didn't design for ourselves. We did what we have done in education, what perhaps we are going to do in politics—we seized upon the ugly, utilitarian makeshift thing that men have constructed. We lost our chance to bring our own sex genius to bear upon the situation. And, therefore, we have the whole thing to do over again from a new angle.

For every woman, except the dressy moron, longs to be freed from the weariness and vexation of spirit, the waste of time and money, that inheres in our present fashion system. Every woman, except the aforesaid moron, feels innerly degraded, as well as bored, by the expenditures which the system forces upon her. A whole world waiting to be studied, learned, enjoyed, conquered—and she has long lists of appointments with corsetières, dressmakers, milliners, bootmakers, dry-goods stores! She realizes the foolishness, the ignominy of her sartorial life, so to speak.

And, by and by, when she realizes that the path of escape which once seemed opened to her has been blocked by her too-swift acceptance of men's way as the proved, best way, and her consequent bondage to ugliness for a period, she is going to tackle the problem again, with the idea of beauty as well as of utility in her mind. And then—ah, then!



Portrait of a Lady with a Letter

By Winona Godfrey

Author of "Fireflies," "Her Own Price," etc.

ILLUSTRATED BY MARSHALL FRANTZ

A poet takes a little flyer in "love"—with beneficial results.

OF course, whether unrequited passions are so good for poets is a question. It was not, after all, Keats' love for Fanny Brawn that killed him; and Ainslie Ryde's *grande passion* for Muriel Caskin did not kill him—quite—a really immaterial distinction, because the pangs of death are pale beside some suffering. It was like this:

Ainslie Ryde, in spite of his poetic aspirations, was a good sort, and made no attempts to live up to certain poetical traditions. He cultivated no flowing locks nor Byronic collars, did not even wear a Windsor tie, and was in the habit of retiring at a healthful hour. He was a bookkeeper in a modest feed-and-fuel establishment owned by one Samuel Bensley. So there was one tradition true with Ainslie—he was not a money maker and not at all unhappy about his poverty. He had never, in fact, thought much about it, accepted it a good deal as he did the weather. Until he met Muriel.

It was at some scribblers'-society doings to which Muriel had been dragged by somebody. One of Ainslie's poems—not bad—had been read, and Miss Caskin was "so interested" to meet a real poet, you know.

"Oh, Mr. Ryde, your verse was charming! I don't know when I've been so interested! It must be so fascinating to write!"

Mr. Ryde blushed, and stammered something to the effect that he was sorry troubadours were out of date—he should like nothing better than to sing Miss Caskin's beau—er—ah—the—

"Oh, would you write something for me, Mr. Ryde? How lovely! Isn't that sweet of you! Now, don't forget, will you?"

Ainslie swore he wouldn't—couldn't, and then somebody interrupted. But the damage was done. From the moment, he assured himself, that his eyes met hers, he was hers forever. She was the one woman—"that not impossible she, who shall command my heart and me!"

He sat up till three o'clock in the morning "fashioning little refrains" to lay on the altar of the divine Muriel, and sent them to her by special delivery before he had breakfast. He expected her to telephone him the *minute* she had read them—picturing how pleased and appreciative she'd be. Not a word for three days of agony and racking theorizing. Then he knew that she had never received the tribute, and she must wonder why he had not fulfilled his promise. So, shy and trembling and humble, he telephoned to her—to apologize.

Her address was impressive even in the telephone directory. A manservant answered the phone.

"Miss Caskin? Yes, sir. What

name shall I say, sir? Mr. Pied, yes, sir. Oh, Mr. Ryde—beg pardon, sir. Just a moment, sir."

He waited—a long time. And then her voice. Ah! Cool and sweet and careless.

"Yes?"

"Oh—ah—Miss Caskin—this is Ainslie Ryde." His voice shook.

"Beg pardon?"

"A—Ainslie Ryde. Er—I was to send you some verses—remember? Met at the Jennings' the other night. I sent them, you know."

"Oh, yes, Mr. Ryde! Yes, I got them. Awfully sweet of you to think about it!"

"You—you liked them?"

"Indeed I did. Perfectly dear! Awfully sweet of you to do them for me."

"Oh, I loved doing them," he vowed.

"I—enjoyed meeting you so much."

Sweet of him, she murmured. Dare he hope that he might see her again soon? Had another little song he'd done last night. Would she possibly like to see it? If she would permit him the very great honor of calling upon her some time—Charmed to see him any time. She was at home on Thursdays, four to six—drop in some day. Oh, it's nothing at all. Awfully glad you called. Good-by.

You can imagine Ainslie in his carefully pressed other suit, a slim, sensitive-mouthed, deep-eyed boy—he was twenty-three then—arriving at the Caskin mansion the next Thursday—having contrived a few hours' leave from the coal office—being greeted by the divine Muriel, and presented to a group of the "younger set," who said, "Charmed, I'm sure," and then ignored him. He had never been in such a house before, walked on priceless rugs, been surrounded by tasteful and costly things, by tasteful and costly women. He was impressed, but not overwhelmed, for he had some sense of values. It pleased him that his goddess

should have so fitting a setting more than it warned him of another world.

He managed to outstay the others and read his new verses to Muriel. They were, on the whole, more charming than she knew, and she was flattered, anyway. No one objects to breathing the incense of worship, and if Ainslie was not of her set, he was not vulgar nor even—such was his sincerity—very awkward. Muriel began to be rather pleased with her Dante, as time passed, and had no objections to turning slowly on her pedestal for his edification. She did not expect him to have the presumption to ask her to descend from it.

Muriel was not much past twenty, rather tall than short, with one of those slim, rounded figures in which painters love to personify Spring. Her hair was a lovely chestnut color, always beautifully marcelled, and there was excuse in her long hazel eyes, her red and merry and delicious mouth, her rose-petal skin, for a poet's rapture. She was one of the women who look at men with a slightly veiled expression which seems to say: "If once I should unmask for you! Can you guess what is hidden in my heart—what fire, what mystery!" Again, you can imagine what a young poet could see in those eyes! What he could write about them!

What they could, my words expressed,
Oh, my love, my all, my one!

He walked the floor nights, breathing lyrics to his ceiling and then jotting them down lovingly with a stubby pencil. Jane Bensley—did I say that Ainslie roomed in his employer's house?—Jane would sit up in bed in the next room, shaking her tousled hair out of sleepy eyes, with a smolder in them, and listening with a frown and a pursed-up mouth to a lilting line of which she could distinguish about one passionate word. Jane and Ainslie were pretty good friends, took walks together and went to the movies occa-



He managed to outstay the others and read his new verses to Muriel.

sionally. Ainslie, unpoetlike, was not a bit of a philanderer. "He's saving it all up for one grand, glorious, desperate crush!" the observant Jane had once wryly told herself. And Jane was quick to see when the day of expenditure arrived.

The poor poet had no money—that excellent wooer—with which to testify to his love in terms of flowers and jewels and motor rides and the fashionable embellishment of himself. All he had was words of beauty and of wonder. And he was lavish with these. Where he had turned out a poem or so a month, now they flowed in almost daily tribute, facile, exquisite in imagery, sincerely

passionate in feeling, "honest songs" of a real emotion. And they were big with young dreams, full of hope and fire and the castles of happiness-to-be.

Still pleased with her rôle of Beatrice, Muriel allowed him to see her frequently, even took him for rides into the country in her high-powered run-about. The verses pleased her, and it was she who urged him to submit them to a publisher.

"But these are just for *you*!" he said.

"Proud little me!" said Muriel, giving him a side glance from her lovely eyes. "I want to be unselfish, though. Let me share them with the world. I want you to be famous, my poet!"

"Your poet," breathed the ardent boy. "That's all I want to be!"

"I'm asking something of you," pouted Muriel. That settled it. "If you wish it," he instantly yielded.

And so, one of the stable publishers brought out in the autumn a volume that attained almost immediate popularity and some critical approval—"Songs for Fenella" by Ainslie Ryde.

The day that Sam Bensley's book-keeper put that precious volume into Muriel's hands—well, only the gods know that exquisite joy when they are young! For a moment—remember, he was only twenty-three—the world was an apple in his hand, from which he might take as large a bite as pleased him. He thought his fortune was made. From simple worship he might now stretch his hands to possess.

"Oh, Muriel, my Fenella! I love you! I adore you! Darling, be my wife!" And,

"Oh, my dearest boy," said Fenella, "now don't be absurd!"

"But I shall make money now," he urged—innocent poet—on his knees beside her chair. "Dearest, I love you so!"

"You're a dear boy, and I'm awfully fond of you—but—please don't say such things now." Muriel's hand slipped and touched his hair. Love interested her extremely, but—

Still, let us be just to Muriel. She was not in love; love seldom begets love; and Muriel's heart cannot be coerced simply because our sympathies urge her to return so tenderly romantic an affection. If Muriel had loved Ainslie, perhaps she would have been romantic, too, flung past prudence and family protests to lay her head on a poor poet's breast. Perhaps she might. Who knows? Muriel's situation was, I repeat, much simpler—she did not love him.

Just then the same inexorable factor that complicated and simplified and

tangled and untangled ten million other love affairs commandeered Ainslie—the war. And Ainslie Ryde, the poet, you remember, was twenty-three and a pretty good specimen, and was unencumbered and was not engaged in any essential industry—Jane could take over his puny job and her country expected her to do it.

Well—Muriel kissed him good-by and so did Jane, and, in company with all those other boys whose lips had been pressed by their Muriels and Janes, he sailed for France. Now, a great deal happened to Ainslie in France, but the principal thing to him was keeping up the siege of Muriel's heart with letters into which he put all the fine fire of his young love. Muriel had not said that she could *never* love him, and so, every mail ship carried a love letter which Romeo might have written to Juliet or Tristan to Isolde.

She replied with sweet little letters in which she never mentioned a single thing that had been said in his—than which there is no more maddening thing under heaven! Poor Ainslie felt, sometimes, as if he were banging his head against a stone wall, but, disappointed as he was when he read those eagerly opened, inconsequent little letters, they were at least from *her*, and he would return with faith and courage to the bombardment.

One fine, sunshiny mail morning, he trudged through the mud to receive a sweet little royalty check from his publishers—it was a good year for soldier poets—the usual, sweetly noncommittal letter from Muriel, and a nice long friendly letter from Jane, inclosing a newspaper clipping.

The engagement is announced of Miss Muriel Caskin, daughter of the rubber magnate, to Mr. Hugh Waring Devine, prominent in social and financial circles.

He kept reading it over and over and over. It couldn't be true. Jane—the little cat! Muriel had not, had never,

hinted such a thing! In this very letter in his hand she did not so much as mention any Hugh Devine. He was surprised at Jane sending him a rumor like that, before it could be denied. Did she want to make trouble? It wasn't a bit like her to do a thing like that when she knew, as, of course, she did know, that he and Muriel— My God! Could it be true?

Well, it was true. Confirmation came soon enough. Muriel would always think of him as *her* poet, and "please don't stop being friends, nor stop writing the *wonderful letters*" which meant so much to her.

Of course, he meant to stop them, but the flood tides of his passion surged past the inhibition of his defeat, his pride, his sense of injury. Muriel was Muriel. He loved her. He could not help that.

If your changed heart restless grew,
Should my heart then turn from you?
Rather should it not be proving
What is loving?

After all, the hero of a great and unrequited love is a more romantic figure than a mere healthy, accepted suitor. He did not, of course, say any such thing to himself, nor do any melancholy strutting, but his fine eyes were very wise when people spoke of love and marriage. Love he had known—ah, a great love! And he would never marry. He thought of writing a "Vita Nuova" like Dante; was fired by this notion to compose very rapidly, in the alternate inspiration of an exalted despair and a tender resignation, a book of verse called, finally, "The Lost Fenella," the first volumes of which appeared in the bookshops on the very day that Muriel became Mrs. Devine.

It was a success. A large part of the reading public is perennially in love, and Ainslie Ryde's two volumes expressed and rarefied every emotion any lover ever felt—hope, doubt, ecstasy, despair, passion, tenderness, resignation, accusa-

tion, contrition, humility, pride, delicate fancies and whimsicalities, wild pæans—a large list barely hinting the subtle possibilities of the subject. This, for the public who did not know that "Fenella" was Mrs. Hugh Devine, and for the private easement of his soul those quite masterly letters offering to Mrs. Hugh Devine a pathetic gayety, a tender sadness, a red-and-white adoration, always just breathing the wish to give all, asking nothing.

Externally, the poet was enmeshed in all the adventures and dangers, the humdrum and the boredom of wars and camps. Then, a not very serious wound, and, with an interesting limp, Ainslie was mustered out.

Muriel Caskin Devine sat at a graceful, spindle-legged desk, reading some letters written in a plain, clerkly hand which oddly dropped every once in a while into cramped illegibility and scrawls—the writing of a bookkeeper-poet. All these letters, and there were a good many of them, began: "To You." And Muriel was rereading them with lightly parted lips, with a quickening of breath, with an occasional smile, an occasional sigh. She loved him? Not at all. But she loved love, and she loved this darling expression of it. Being a woman, she loved the dream and eloquence of love—and her honeymoon was over!

Besides, Hugh was just a regular man and did not know how to put on love those wings which women adore so. If he had known that, when Muriel first laid her head on his shoulder, she fancied that his heart was filled with the bewitching conceits, the imaginative passion of Ainslie Ryde's romantic muse! That was why she had not forbidden Ainslie to write to her after her engagement, after her marriage. He was contributing a harmonious, delightful, and glorifying accompaniment to the song of songs!



"How long has this been going on?" He turned to her, crushing the letter in his hand.

Now, a year had passed, she was experiencing the unacknowledged ennui of satiety, the inevitable slump of accustomedness, so likely to attack the pampered. A note from Ainslie, announcing his return and begging an interview, had enticed her again to look through the letters signed "A. R." She wanted to fix a policy with regard to A. R., and she was not sure what it should be. She need not now cater to the snobbishness that had colored her

attitude toward the shabby bookkeeper. Ainslie had been lifted, if not to her side, at least on to her legitimate horizon, by becoming a quite popular minor poet and a lieutenant of infantry.—Too bad he had not gone in for aviation!—A devoted poet, if personable, is, on the whole, a desirable addition to any lady's train.

Only—Hugh was inclined to be jealous. Not that petty, bumptious touchiness, flaring at any man's mere glance of

admiration, but with the sensitiveness of the man who wants the pride of Caesar.

Suddenly the door opened, and Hugh entered. Muriel started, not really thinking to be concerned over her occupation, but wondering that he had not knocked, that he was home at this unusual hour, and at a certain set control of his face which she had noticed once or twice when he had been moved or displeased. His gaze fixed at once, with a sort of a justified "ah-ha" expression, on the letter in her hand, at the two or three ribbon-bound packets on the desk.

"Who is your letter from?" he asked, quietly enough, advancing to the middle of the room, where he stood staring at her, his hands in his coat pockets and his feet spread apart—an attitude which gave him a look of solidity, like a school-boy reciting: "This rock shall fly from its firm base as soon as I!"

"You startled me! Has anything happened? I was just looking over some old letters."

"Would you mind letting me see them?"

"Why, *Hugh!* How absurd! Why should I mind? But why should you ask such a silly thing?"

"Are all those letters from the same person?" There was a grimness in his tone that warned the lady as her agreeable conscience had not.

"Really!" She raised her eyebrows and lifted her chin in a pantomime expressive of disapproval of his methods, and of a high-bred conviction that it was none of his business.

"Are they?"

"Probably not," said Muriel lightly, sweeping them back into the drawer, and turning the key. "I was clearing out the desk."

Hugh had taken a stride. He got his hand on the key before she could withdraw it, opened the drawer, snatched out the letter she had been reading, and ran his eye over it, while the amazed Muriel, who had never before known

the moment that she was not mistress of, could only gasp helplessly.

As he read, his face settled more into resolution, his lips stiffened, his eyes grew cold.

"How long has this been going on?"

"Hugh! Have you gone mad?" She gave a little angry laugh. "I don't know what you mean."

He turned to her, crushing the letter in his hand.

"Long ago," he said coldly. "I looked around this set of ours, and made up my mind, if I ever married, I'd have things different—idle women, careless husbands, or helpless ones. I was going to have no tame robins in my house. And you! To think I never even heard of this until to-day!"

"Be a little more explicit, please," she requested disdainfully.

"I came on it accidentally. They were discussing Ryde's verse. There were some insinuating laughs about the 'lost Fenella'—some things were said. Suddenly I saw what an idiot I'd been—that it was *you!*"

Muriel was looking at him, too, with opened eyes. This hard-eyed man was not the Endymion breathing poetry to the moon that she had fancied; he was an exacting gentleman whom she did not fancy nearly so much.

"Same old romance!" he went on unpleasantly. "The poor poet and the fashionable heiress who could not afford to marry him. She marries some rich ass, stupid enough not to suspect the pitiful rôle he is expected to play."

"Hugh, please!" She sank down into the desk chair. She was hurt, a little frightened, and really not at all certain whether she was guilty or not.

"Well, he can *have* you!" cried Hugh. "I want no woman on such terms! I see now that you were never—really mine! You can have him, do you hear? There's always Reno!" His voice seemed to fail him. He stamped to the door and slammed it behind him.

Muriel did not go after him; she was incredulous, stunned, excited, and *curious*. Her feeling for Ainslie Ryde had never disturbed her, but now, Hugh's accusation made her want to analyze it. She had been—oh, just a little—bored with Hugh lately. Now she was very angry at him. She read again with a new interest several of Ainslie's letters—those dreaming, adoring, wholly charming love letters of a poet.

How delicious to be always loved like that! To be the inspiration that called forth these winged words, to be the object of this winged passion! Let Hugh beware! Let him beware lest the seed he had planted in her unawareness take root. Perhaps he had disclosed a flower already blossoming. She was curious to see Ainslie Ryde again.

Ainslie was sitting before a cheerful fire in the Bensley living room. He had no folks of his own, and it seemed necessary to him to have a definite spot to return to, so he had naturally sought the Bensleys, who had received him most cordially. Jane was sitting there, too—it was after coal-office hours—her lovely red hair looking quite molten in the firelight, her brown eyes masked by drooping lids, and her red mouth just a bit sulky. Ainslie tried not to be distraught, but he couldn't keep from thinking all the time that to-morrow he would see Muriel. Muriel! Time and the whirl of events had taken a great deal of the sting out of her marriage, so that he was not stabbing himself with much thought of that now. Just to see her again!

He kept dragging himself back from luring reverie to answer Sam Bensley's questions about what "Yurru" was going to burn next winter, and was it so "that the French burned charcoal same as the Chinks?" There was also present Sam's younger brother, Gibson, a red-headed giant with a tenor voice, ex-sailor and wanderer over the earth, soft-

spoken, with a ready "mister," and a big, hard, quick fist. He had said little, but his attention was on the poet. At last, he spoke to him in a voice as smooth as cream:

"I been readin' your rhymes, Mr. Ryde."

"Have you, indeed?" said Ainslie, and felt somehow as if he had been caught playing with dolls.

"Some of them," said the giant, "are clear and musical, like a little waterfall singing in a wood."

"Why, thank you," said Ainslie, surprised, and giving his full attention now.

"I listened for breakers," Gib Bensley went on, "and for the murmur that's on the edge of the typhoon—but—I didn't hear them." He smiled blandly.

Ainslie was oddly thinking how incongruous those dainty gilt-edged volumes must have looked in Gib's big fist.

"Why, I don't believe," said Gib politely, "you've ever looked over the side of the ship into the big blue ocean!"

"I'm afraid I don't quite get you," said Ainslie, but not too stiffly. He felt he should be tolerantly amused.

"I've heard rumors," said Gib pleasantly, "that somebody's stumbled on the track of the Incas' old emerald mines. It would be sport to stroll down there and get a pocketful of emeralds, eh? Wouldn't it?"

"Good sport," grinned the poet. Gib was undoubtedly cracked.

"There'd be the sea and the mountains and the mystery of the ancients and a witchcrafty green stone to chase." Gib smiled only with his eyes. "A poet's diet, I should say, eh?"

"Oh, quite," the poet agreed, glancing at Jane, whose eyes were still veiled, but whose sulky lips were twisted into an odd little smile.

"There's rivalry for a woman," said Gib easily. "Or—the triumph of a necklace of emeralds around her neck. How'd you like to go with me, Mr. Ryde?"

Ainslie mumbled something. It was such an absurd proposition, particularly when sprung in this offhand manner, and yet, he saw now that the big man was not mad nor jesting, saw dimly *purpose*—inexplicable. What could he mean by—

"You'll be going into something, I suppose?" Gib suggested.

"Why, yes, of course—something." Ainslie hesitated. He felt suddenly inconsequent, rudderless. He was a shallop which Muriel's hand had pushed from the shore. And at the moment he did not feel seaworthy. But to-morrow he would see Muriel!

nevertheless. The golden cage—of wealth, of marriage! What good strong bars shut him out!

Enter Muriel.

"My dear boy!" Words that mean nothing much, a subtle intonation that might mean anything. She gave him her hands, her smile, her eyes, with a warmth that might have made a bolder



"You'll be going into something, I suppose?" Gib suggested. Ainslie hesitated. He felt suddenly inconsequent, rudderless.

"Tell *me* about the emeralds," said Jane in her voice that was creamy, too, with fire under, like a slow, satiny flow of lava. "Maybe I'd like to go with you, uncle Gib!"

Of course, Muriel would not be waiting for him, she would have to make an entrance. He looked about, not feeling quite so incongruous in uniform as he used to in his old blue serge, but depressingly conscious of the golden cage,

man venture the citadel of her lips. He paled with the memory of that good-by kiss. It had been a mere butterfly thing—flutter of wings—something whispered that now— Yes, there was something about her now that suggested *difference*. Any hope and dream had been supplied by him, then; now there was in the atmosphere between them that something which only the woman can put there, a delicate warmth, some exquisite, hesitant something which

seems almost to be fragrant, a message subtle as hidden incense—"I am—within your reach."

The poet got it, and it amazed, intoxicated, and perplexed him. Truly, he had never expected much, had asked nothing save leave to worship; had thought—such was his unworldliness—that her marriage removed her to a shrine so remote that he might lay on it only the most secret and sublimated oblations.

"Your letters have made me so happy!" she murmured. "They express what—others—can never find words for. They are—soul symphonies—played for the yearning rest of us!"

"It makes me happy to hear you say that," he assured her, not very happily.

She said he had changed. He denied it significantly. Then, perhaps, it was she who had changed, after all. Had she changed? Couldn't he *sense* it in her, then? This with a deep glance. Well, he fancied, perhaps, there was a *tiny* difference in her. It seemed so with every one. The war— Ah, yes—perhaps it was the war. And yet, there were other things—new vision, that might change one—experience—a sort of awakening. Didn't he think these came to one sometimes? Might change one's ideas—one's heart, she had almost said. Yes, he thought so. After all he had changed, he hoped. He had needed, he felt, the experience the war had brought him—contact with the world, with men. His horizon had been too narrow, his world built too much of dreams, too little of reality. He hoped he had profited, was steadied by it all. She was sure of it. Had he made any plans? She was *so* interested!

And so they talked—she no longer on her pedestal, condescending to breathe the incense he humbly burned, but, as it were, come down to sit beside him, and showing a quite human curiosity in his heart and plans—with, in-

deed, almost a hint of calculating *her own pulse!* He found this pretty heady, of course.

But, when he rose to go, he said with no assurance:

"Shall I—see you again?"

"Why not?" she smiled.

"Well—you're married."

She shrugged her lovely shoulders.

"But this is the twentieth century! Sure we can be *friends!*"

"If you say so," he murmured devoutly, and kissed her hand, as they do in France.

As he was coming thoughtfully down the steps from the house, an automobile stopped in front, a good-looking and fashionable young man descended from it, and stood waiting on the sidewalk, looking the poet over, as he approached, somewhat pointedly and superciliously. To his surprise, the man addressed him:

"Mr. Ainslie Ryde?" in tones not at all apologetic.

Ryde paused and bowed.

"I am Hugh Devine. I want to talk to you. Let's take a ride." He opened the car door and motioned the poet in.

Ainslie was startled by the name, and surprised by the curt invitation, but he managed to rise to the occasion with an ironical, "Delighted," and climbed in.

Devine, driving rapidly toward the country, was not long in broaching his subject.

"I understand, Mr. Ryde, that you and Mrs. Devine are—old friends."

"We have been acquainted some time." It was easy to see what was in the air, and he suspected already that Devine's methods might be crude.

"Am I wrong in thinking that your 'Lost Fenella' refers to her?"

Ainslie smiled. After all, he was not afraid of Muriel's husband.

"No, you are not."

"Then you admit that you are in love with her?" he asked sharply, like a cross-questioning attorney.

"A dedication hardly proves so much," said Ainslie dryly.

"What do you think," proceeded Hugh in his controlled voice, "should be the attitude of a man, in such a case, toward the woman, after she is married?"

"That, circumstances usually decide for him."

"Frequently, yes. But you, it seems, have the idea that you can still—I don't doubt you call it being friends."

"I got home from France only a few days ago. This is the first time I have seen Mu—Mrs. Devine."

"You are expecting me to say that it must be the last. And if I say that, you will go on writing passionate verse to her, and she will keep your letters in a locked drawer, and you will meet—oh, quite by chance of course—in the park and by the river, and all that. And I shall never *know*—I shall never be *sure*—"

"I think you are rather unduly alarmed," said Ainslie. "You forget that, after all, she is yours."

"But I don't care to have her on such terms!" cried Devine hoarsely. "That's a part I've always promised myself never to play. *Mine!* Like calling the sea yours, because you've got a motor boat. I'll resign! If she must have you around singing your damned little songs, she can have you! But she can't have us both!"

"You're so much ahead of the situation," said Ainslie, white now, too. "Muriel cares nothing for me—she never has!"

Devine sneered.

"Lied like a gentleman! She wouldn't have permitted those letters otherwise!"

"You don't think so?" inquired the poet with so much interest that Devine, snatching an exasperated glance at him, almost collided with a car driven by a fat man possessed of a highly variegated vocabulary.

"I won't be made a fool of!" Devine

declared, after the interlude. "I've seen how these things go, when husbands wait patiently for it to 'blow over' or 'work out.' I couldn't stand that daily torture of uncertainty. Better have it over at once. I've thought it out. I'll retire gracefully—you understand what I mean? And there's Reno."

Ainslie was astounded, incapable of speech. What sort of fellow was this Devine! He could not imagine any man's acting in this incredible manner—outside burlesque. It would have been natural, perhaps, if Devine had tried mistakenly to kill him. But this!

As if the interview were over and the whole matter finally disposed of, Devine turned the car and was speeding back to town. Ryde's few attempts to reason with him brought only such absurd misstatements and misunderstandings that he soon ceased any effort at enlightenment, and asked to be set down. Devine complied with exaggerated courtesy and drove on, leaving the poet some miles from home.

Ainslie Ryde's thoughts were surely long, long thoughts as he walked those miles. Devine seemed to mean what he said, but what gave real point to this contretemps was Muriel's changed attitude! Could it be possible that, after all, she had come to love him? Had those letters really been so eloquent, pleaded his case so well, taught her to read her own heart truly? If so, his dream might yet come true. Muriel, his!

Very strangely, he did not turn drunk with joy. His face flushed, but it was with anger. He had cut a pretty figure just now. He was dimly conscious of not feeling just as he should about it. He should have been half mad with happiness, have been able to treat Devine with the superiority, the magnanimity of the winner. Instead, his hot desire was to punch Devine's head—for several reasons. One, for being such a poor thing that he couldn't hold a

woman after he had won her. Queer that a man who hadn't been married much more than a year should be apparently looking for a chance to—

Muriel called him rather late that evening to ask him to have tea with her the next afternoon.

He went.

It proved not a particularly hilarious occasion. Muriel was restless and sort of excited, and seemed to expect him to make love to her, sort of whipped him up when his compliments lagged. It was certainly a perversity that they should lag. But they did. Muriel was, of course, very lovely physically, but it seemed strange to him that he had never noticed that she was a little shallow mentally. She was oddly absent-minded, too, some of the time. She asked him some questions about his plans for the future, and once delicately reminded him of his saying that his life was hers. Was he still of that mind? He swore he was—of course. She had not looked as reassured as a little frightened.

At home, he idly turned the leaves of a magazine, while he listened to Gibson Bensley speculating again to Sam about the emeralds of the Incas. A line caught his eye: "His eloquence and persistence had won out." *His* eloquence and persistence *had* won out, over practically insuperable obstacles! He saw himself walking always at Muriel's side—well, a step or two behind perhaps. And he would be expected to keep on writing passionately. Well, what was the matter with him? Wasn't that—hadn't it always been—his idea of *heaven*?

Sam was addressing him:

"Been lookin' about, have you, Ainslie? Are you goin' into something, or

have you decided to devote yourself to littertoor?"

"Why"—Ainslie seemed to blink a little as if a light had been suddenly turned in his face—"I have been looking about. And I'm afraid I'm not ready to settle yet. I—you know, I think I'll go with Gib here after those emeralds—if he'll let me."

"You're on!" cried Gib heartily.

Ainslie sent Muriel a note, saying that he was so busy outfitting for his wonderful adventure that he was afraid he wouldn't be able to see her again. He wanted her to know that he was grateful, that he understood now how she had shaped his talent, how—well, he hoped every happiness would be hers.

And Muriel telephoned at once to Hugh—to whom she had not been speaking lately.

"I just wanted you to *know* how absurd you've been! I shall probably *never* see Mr. Ryde again!"

"*So it worked!*" Hugh exulted, to her mystification. "All right, old peaches! We're friends again, then? I want you to have a lot of love, but I can supply it all myself!"

"I know you're going to find those emeralds," whispered Jane, her face close to Ryde's, as they stood together before the ship sailed. "You'll—write to me, Ainslie, won't you?"

"Jane, Jane, will you write to me?"

"Of course, but they—won't be much, I'm afraid. You—you can write such wonderful letters, I know!"

"Oh, I don't know." He flushed a little. "Anyway, letters don't— But I'm going to get you an emerald necklace, Jane, dear, or die!"



Intellectual Brains

By Elmer Brown Mason

Author of "The Black Flamingo," "Saint and Señorita," etc.

ILLUSTRATED BY E. W. KEMBLE

When you see a dinky story by Elmer Brown Mason, don't fail to read it. He knows the race—and besides, this is a truly funny story.

NO, sah, Miss Virginia, he-beauty ain' everythin' in dis hyah worl'," stated Mary Louise positively, as she ran the ivory comb with long, deft sweeps through her mistress' pretty brown hair. "He-beauty ain' nothin'! What I a'mires in a man am intellechal brains."

"But you wouldn't marry an ugly man, would you, Mary Louise?"

"A man don't have to be ugly to have brains, Miss Virginia, that is, not powerful ugly," she temporized. "But I'se jus' got to have intellechal brains in the man w'ich I marries, that's sho'."

"Oh, you mean that your husband must be able to make a lot of money? You are turning Yankee, Mary Louise," accused her mistress.

"Now, honey," indignantly protested the girl, the while fluffing the brown hair with chocolate-colored fingers, "yo' ain' got no call to say such woahds to me. Yo' know I'se a 'spectable cullud pusson w'ich has always 'sociated with quality white folks. I ain' no Yankee! Beside, some of the smahtest men in dis hyah worl' ain' got no money. Yo' orter know that, Miss Virginia!"

"That's so," sighed Virginia Talbot, mentally comparing her small flat with the comforts of the large Virginia homestead she had given up to marry her young artist husband. "That's so, Mary Louise. I only wish that we had been rich enough to keep you."

"Now, Miss Virginia," reproved her

former handmaiden, "don' yo' worry a mite 'bout me. I'se makin' heaps of money outer fixin' ladies' hair, an' I'se jus' same as yo' maid on Sundays." Then, with a rare tact, she returned abruptly to her former subject. "No, sah, he-beauty ain't nothin'; money ain't nothin'. Dis hyah am an age of upliftin's an' not downsettin's. If yo' want yo' inside haid to be uplifted, yo'se gotter 'sociate with intellechal brains. Now, there's the han'somest culled gen'man yo' wantee see come co'tin' me eve'y evenin' at my boahdin' house. He's jus' the han'somest gen'man, Miss Virginia, jus' the han'somest! But, my Lawd, honey, he jus' don' know nothin'. I ask him, las' night, I does: 'Mistah Lee, do yo' think dis hyah League of Nations am goin' to be a success?' An' he ansah me, Miss Virginia: 'I ain' nevah heah of no s'ch league, but they wouldn't have no chance with the Giants.' Now, ain't that the igno'est niggah, Miss Virginia, now ain' it?"

"Well, every one can't be so well up on international politics as you are," laughed young Mrs. Talbot. "You should have told him what it was, so he wouldn't make the same mistake again. Is he a good working boy, Mary Louise?" she asked with the protective instinct which every Southerner feels for members of the colored race who "belong" to him.

"I done tol' him that it was a kind

of 'public of all the worl', includin' foreign nations, w'ich Mistah Wilson was pres'dent ovah, but he jus' scratch his haid. Then he 'pologize. Not fo' not knowin', but fo' scratchin' his haid. I tried to cure him from scratchin' by coughin' eve'y time he do it, but he jus' brung me these hyah coughin' drops. So I done tol' him right out he couldn' scratch hisself 'roun' me. Yes, Mis Virginia, he makes a pow'ful lot of money. He's a wreckah of buildin's—a boss-man, with a lot of low-class niggahs w'ich he call hahd-boiled aigs."

"Don't you really like him, Mary Louise?" interrogated her mistress.

"I sho' 'nough *do*," the maid agreed with the frankness of her race. "I like him pow'ful, but he ain' got a mite of these hyah brains, Miss Virginia, not a mite, an' that's what I gotter have in my husban'. Look at yo'self, honey! Now ain' yo' haih, done soft an' fluffy, heap mo' becomin' than dis hyah Marcella waxes?"

"Yes, it is," agreed Miss Virginia. "Take what I owe you out of my purse on the bureau, Mary Louise. You're getting good food where you're staying, aren't you?"

"Right good," admitted Mary Louise, taking fifty cents out of the pocketbook—her ministrations had a market value of at least two dollars. "Right good, but they don' have 'nough veg'tables. Oh, honey"—as she spied a sample of bright crimson silk on the dresser—"can I have this hyah pretty?"

It was early in the evening, several days later, that a most resplendent negro swung up a street in the neighborhood of Sixth Avenue and West Fifty-ninth Street. His suit was tan colored, the coat closely belted in at the waist; his shoes were tan with tan spats; and a tan hat, so furry that it all but purred, covered his head. He was a big man, with a round, pleasant face, and not

overthick lips, which opened in an anticipatory smile over a perfect set of teeth, as he ran up the steps of the old brownstone house, the door marked in gold letters: "Colored Boarders Only." Within the parlor, a seated figure extended a languid hand to him.

"Howdy, Miss Mary Louise, I trus' I finds yo' well?"

"Tol'able, Mistah Lee, only tol'able, an' ve'y ennuied."

"Ennuied, huh—huh, ennuied," repeated Mr. Lee suspiciously. Then, "Yo ain' et anythin' w'ich hurt yo' stomach, Miss Mary Louise?"

"No, I ain'," said the girl shortly. "I'se ennuied 'cause there ain' no mo' cultah 'roun' me than there am."

"Can' be no cultah in dis hyah city where they ain' no gahdens," laughed her caller, his fears for her health assuaged.

"Cultah in folks, yo' fool niggah!" snapped Mary Louise.

"Huh," remarked Washington Lee, gazing at her uncomprehendingly. "No, I reckon not. Yo' ain' mad at me, Mary Louise, 'cause I ain' been to see you' fo' foah days, is yo'? I done been to Newark on a tearin'-down job; done made two hundred dollars cash money fo' myself."

"No, I ain' mad at yo'." It would have been hard for any one to resist that brilliant smile. "I ain't mad at yo', Washin'ton Lee, but yo' do make me awful tired. Yo' jus' ain' got a shadder of intellectional brains, yo' ain'."

"I reckon I ain'," the big negro agreed humbly. "I reckon yo' is quite correc', Miss Mary Louise." Then he relapsed into silence. What else could he do? The conversational openings were along far too narrow lanes for his verbal feet. He raised a hand to his head, lowered it quickly, as he realized that he had been on the verge of the doubly and trebly forbidden scratch, and, to cover his embarrassment, burst recklessly into speech:

"Wha' yo' say if me an' yo' goes to the pictyah show? I seen the swellest bill on the one down the street! There's this hyah Charlie Chaplin falls——"

"I 'clare, yo' is the vulg'rest man!" Mary Louise broke in on this vivid description of humor. "I tell you' once fo' all I don' go to no pictyah shows whatsume vah."

By keeping his hands firmly clasped together, Washington Lee managed to refrain from seeking the inspiration his finger nails might have drawn from his woolly pate.

"Miss Mary Louise"—his tones were more than humble—"I reckon I ain' got no 'telligence whatsume vah, but I do love yo' terrible! I make a heap of money f' a po', ignor'nt niggah—some time mo', some time less. But if yo' take from the mo' an' put it on the less, it count up to foah hundred dollahs a month. Yo' don' reckon yo' could marry yo'self to me, honey, an' kind of let me get ed'cated by bein' with yo'?"

The girl heard him out and then shook her head mournfully.

"I'se right sorry, Washin'ton, fo' to —to blush yo' hopes, but I jus' couldn'. I aim to be refine', to be the refin'st culled girl in New Yo'k. I'd get unrefine' if I marry yo', I jus' *would*! If yo' work hahd fo' to get a brain, Mistah Lee, I *might* think of yo'. Yo' is a pow'ful nice man! How many times I done tole yo' yo' can' stratch yo' haid front of me?" She broke off furiously. "Yo' get right out of this hyah boahdin' house. Washin'ton Lee! I won' have no mo' doin's with you' whatsume vah. I'se goin' fo' my vacation to 'sociate with cultah-culled quality, an' I don' want to see yo' no mo', nevah!"

Mary Louise was as good as her word. Saturday night found her on a day coach, the savings of six months safe in the most

reliable of banks known to the daughters of Eve, irrespective of color, and a reservation made by telegraph at a certain famous springs that boasted the most exclusive of hotels in America, catering solely to the colored race. High were her hopes and rosy her dreams, splashed with chocolate-colored figures of African gentlemen, persons of culture, college professors preferably.

"I'se goin' to be refine', but not stand-offish," she assured herself, and shut her eyes to slumber away the hours before reaching her Arcadia.

The Royal Imperial Hotel was all that Mary Louise had dreamed. From brass-buttoned bell boys to ponderous head waiter, it was perfect. The porch held knitting dowagers, brilliantly clothed maidens sitting on the railings, surrounded by languid admirers. A



"I sho' would," agreed Mary Louise enthusiastically, and they were off.

wealthy owner of shoe-shining parlors, with one subject of conversation—the evils of admitting foreigners into the United States, especially Greeks—was being unsuccessfully pursued by a well-preserved widow; the belle of the hotel was being wooed by the handsomest man. Indeed, it was no different from any other summer hotel, except that the puppets pulled by the strings of fate were black instead of white.

Cautious inquiries revealed the fact

that there was a college professor on the third floor, but he was eighty-two years old and had been married four times. Mary Louise regretfully banished him from her thoughts. She dressed carefully for dinner and then ensconced herself on the porch in the twilight, waiting for what the fates might deign to send her. All about were the élite of her race, meticulously garbed young colored men, colored girls brave with finery. The language of culture came pleasantly to her ears. On her right, the stock market was being discussed; on her left, a play.

"'The Soul of a Puppet' cert'nly am an intellectional comedy, Mr. Jones."

"Yes, Miss Johnson, it cert'nly am. Have yo' notice how the motif of the music is pleasin' to the yeah?"

"Eh, huh!" ejaculated Miss Johnson.

"Eh, huh," repeated Mr. Jones.

Mary Louise wiggled ecstatically. *This* was the kind of talk she wanted to hear; *this* was the kind of conversation

her soul craved. Came the strains of music. The guests of the hotel streamed in from the porch. Mary Louise followed. For an awful moment, a feeling of complete wretchedness came over her. The ballroom floor was rapidly filling with happy couples, and she knew no one! Then it happened. *He* stood before her.

"Pardon me, Miss Talbot—I got your name from the register—but you don't seem to know any one. I'm the official

entertainer of the Royal Imperial—see that every one has a good time—in an interval of my schoolastic studies. Would you care to dance?"

"I sho' would," agreed Mary Louise enthusiastically, and they were off.

After the music stopped, her cavalier did not desert her, but found a seat by her side, and she had an opportunity to examine him. Certainly no one would have put him down as handsome. He was half Mary Louise's size and his feature were those of a treacherous ape, but,

oh, his tongue, his clothes! Honeyed words of undeniable culture flowed from his lips while Mary Louise listened, entranced, and admired the red buttons on his black-silk waistcoat, the perfect fit of the dinner coat over his narrow shoulders.

"Yes, this position is only temp'rary, to help me out with my schoolastic studies. I'se—I'm a junior in college in New York—only one more year to get my degree, an' then I'll be a lawyer or—or professional man of some kind,



Immaculately clothed in white, Mr. Duval Wilson threaded his way down the porch.

anything where brains and ed'cation counts. You dance beautifully, Miss Talbot. Are you a professional?"

"No, I'se—I'se a—a beauty expert. 'Tends to quality white folks in my sto' on Fifth Avenue. Mistah—Mistah—I didn' jus' catch yo' name."

"Wilson. Duval Wilson, at your service. Come and let me introduce some young men to you—you are such a beautiful dancer. I'm coming back for the one after this myself."

To say Mary Louise had a good time would be to put it mildly. She reveled. There were partners galore, and even the other dusky maidens were kind to her, the men having shown the way. Only one incident marred the evening, and this she promptly forced herself to forget. It was a warning anent Duval Wilson, delivered by another girl: "Yo' look out fo' that monkey-face niggah. He's done been debarred f' om all games of chance by the hotel. He done made love to Miss 'Scilla Joy, an' she done turn him down. He ain' *no* good!" Mary Louise put this down to jealousy and smiled on him the more.

Immaculately clothed in white, Mr. Duval Wilson threaded his way down the porch. Curious glances followed him, tongues wagged maliciously. His devotion to Miss Mary Louise Talbot, proprietress of a beauty shop on Fifth Avenue, had been more than patent. Those belles who would not have permitted him in their train were resentful that he had not given them the opportunity to voice their refusals. Even Miss 'Scilla Joy, undisputed queen of the Royal Imperial, sniffed as he went past, though she gave him a kindly smile. He stopped before Mary Louise's chair, and she raised timid and delighted eyes to him.

"Would you care to go promenading with me, Miss Talbot? The sun is seeking his rest and the atmosphere is some cooler."

"*Sho' would!*" she agreed, rising.

"I'se—I've often cogitated on how you feel, you people who are in the marts of trade," remarked Duval Wilson musingly. "Do you have time to get food for the stomach of the soul, or is your whole mind taken up with money?"

"We don' get much cultah, an' that's a fac'," regretfully acknowledged Mary Louise. "And if yo' ain't got intellectional brains, you ain' got *nothin'*. When I marries a man, I don' care how ugly he is, if he only got intellectional brains."

"I quite agree with you," her escort admitted with a sigh, and then he sighed again. "The worst of it is that I'm afraid I'll have to give up my schoolastical ed'cation for a time and go into the marts of trade myself."

"Yo' means yo' gotter get a job?" interrogated Mary Louise in horrified tones.

"I'm afraid so. I must be a hewer of water and a breaker of stones. It is repugnant to me. I crave ed'cation something terrible, but I'm out of funds—I ain' got no more money."

"How much do yo' need?"

"A mere trifling sum, the way you rich people look at it," he laughed bitterly. "If I had a hundred dollars, I'd be all right. Don't offer to lend it to me, though. I might take money from a woman if she were my wife, but not under other circumstances."

The girl turned imploring eyes down to him, but he would not see them. As for her, she had no words, dared not put into speech what was in her thoughts. With bowed head, and wrapped in deep melancholy, he walked silently back to the hotel, an unhappy Mary Louise by his side.

It was a miserable evening. To begin with, Mary Louise caught her admirer whispering intimately with Miss 'Scilla Joy in the corridor, and, later, he did not dance with her as often as she wished. After the band had jazzed

a syncopated version of "Home, Sweet Home," he joined her on the porch, however, and brought a cushion for her to sit on by his side, on the steps.

The night was soft and still; trees whispered mysteriously. Refined by the layer of concrete between, came the cries of the players from the African golf course on the pool tables below in the basement: "Big Dick f'om French Lick, come to *me*; seven come w'ich I dies f'om." Another rich voice took up the chant: "*Up* with yo' money an' a foah an' a three—let her lie! Little ivo'ies, shine fo' me! Foah an' a foah—then a *five an' a three!*" Duval Wilson tore his attention from the fortunes of the players, with whom he was forbidden to mingle, and spoke sadly:

"One more week, and I will be in the marts of trade! Will you think of me, then, Miss Mary Louise?"

"Sho' I will," said the girl, moved to the very depths of her heart by the picture of this gorgeous, intellectual butterfly, actually toiling for his daily bread. "*Sho'* I will, Mistah Wilson."

"Couldn't you call me Duval for the few days we are sojourning together—before I go?" he suggested softly.

"I—I don' know. I reckon so. It ain' a few days, though, Mistah—I means Duval. I'se goin' back to New Yo'k to-morrer."

"You ain'!" he exclaimed in amazed surprise. "You should have told me!"

"I is, an' I didn' tole yo' 'cause I didn' think yo' caih'd."

"Oh, Mary Louise!" reproachfully. "Listen to what you being here has done to this poor gentleman." And glibly he recited:

"Sweet, thou hast trod on my heart,
One of a world full of men.
I ask only this, 'fore we part:
If you wish, tread on it again."

"Oh-h-h-h, Duval, don' yo' say no sech wicked things!" sobbed Mary Louise. "I wouldn' hurt yo' heart fo'—fo' nothin'."

"You don't mean," said Duval Wilson, leaning forward with a gesture of simulated surprise, "you don't mean that you—that you care for me?"

"I sho' *do!*" she sobbed.

There was no happier girl in the world than Mary Louise for the next hour. True, there intruded the unbidden wish that her lover might have been a trifle taller, so she would not have had to bend down to put her head on his shoulder, but she dismissed it at once. What did mere size matter, in comparison with the obvious culture of her prize? What, indeed, did even good looks weigh against such a flow of honeyed words?

"We must part now, loveliest of your sect!" finally whispered Duval Wilson. "I will not have my future bride lose sleep over me."

"Turn 'roun' fo' a minute," directed Mary Louise, and she reached down in her stocking behind his back, the while mentally adding up the amount of her hotel bill and railroad fare to New York.

"Take this fifty dollars, honey," she said, pressing some bills into his hand. "I want yo' to go right on with you' schoolastic ed'cation."

"It will take a hundred dollars. Besides, I couldn't think of accepting it from you. Better I work for a while—hard though it be!"

"I'll give yo' the other fifty jus' soon as yo' come to New Yo'k," she interrupted him. "Jus' in a week it will be, won't it, honey?"

"A week alone separates me from you," he answered, and slipped the bills into his pocket.

A happy Mary Louise caught the nine o'clock train the next morning. The parting had been brief and, to her regret, in the presence of others. She had merely given him her address in the city and been rewarded by a tender smile. But she was happy! The future loomed before her as a dream of



Came the cries of the players from the African golf course on the pool tables in the basement:
 "Big Dick f'om French Lick, come to me; seven come w'ich I dies f'om."

delight, with an intellectual husband ever by her side. Not exactly handsome—perversely her thoughts flew back to the pulchritude of the mentally uncouth Washington Lee—but cultured! He would follow some gentlemanly pursuit and, as the years rolled happily by, she would become more and more refined.

It was late Saturday night when Mary Louise reached the city. Sunday morning found her at the home of her former mistress.

"Did you have a nice vacation?" asked Mrs. Talbot. "You look very well."

"Miss Virginia, I'se the happiest culled lady in the whole worl'!" enthusiastically announced the girl. "The mos' wond'fullest thing done happen to me. I'se goin' fo' to be married!"

"I'm glad to hear it, Mary Louise. I haven't liked the idea of your being all alone in New York. You must first send the man to me, though, so I can have a talk with him and see that he's all right," she added authoritatively.

"Of co'se, I'll send him to you firs',"

Mary Louise agreed, a trifle indignantly. "Ain' yo' all brung me up proppah? But, oh Miss Virginia, he's the most refin'st man! He's—he's jus' wond'ful!"

"Glad to hear it," laughed her mistress. "You deserve a good husband, Mary Louise. What does he do?"

"He's—he's in a college," the girl answered, loath to tell that her lover had no visible means of support, and trusting that Mrs. Talbot would draw the obvious conclusion that he was a professor.

"Well, that's great! You'll have all the brains you want, then."

"Yes'm, I sure *will*," agreed Mary Louise from the very depths of her heart.

A week is a long time to wait for even the most fascinating of lovers. Mary Louise is hardly to be blamed for giving Washington Lee permission to come to see her when he called over the phone on Wednesday. It would give her an opportunity to let him know of her engagement, she told herself. Through pure kindness, she decided not



"Intellectual brains!" he repeated. "Don' let me hear no mo' o' them! Yo'se my woman, Mary Louise!"

to spring it on him at once, and, in spite of herself, she could not help a thrill of pleasure at his beaming greeting:

"I'se pow'ful glad fo' to see yo' back, Miss Mary Louise, an' I'se been thinkin' of yo' ebery minute. An' I'se done mo'. I'se studyin' fo' to get this hyah cultah w'ich yo' is always talkin' 'bout. I'se bought me a book."

"Yo' sho' is bent on improvin' yo'-self," Mary Louise answered, really touched at such devotion. "But, Mistah Lee——"

"An' I don' go to no mo' of these hyah low-down pictyah shows," eagerly interrupted Washington Lee. "I'se goin' to high-class vaudevillahs. An' I'se got tickets fo' us this ebenin' fo' a

sho'-nough theayter party. Hit's call 'The Soul of a Puppy.' I'se fon' of dogs."

"The Soul of a Puppy!" repeated Mary Louise, mystified. Then her mind flew back to the first conversation which had so impressed her on the porch of the Royal Imperial. "Yo' mean 'The Soul of a Puppet,' yo' ign'ant nig—culled pusion!"

"Maybe it am 'Soul of a Puppet,'" he repeated, no whit abashed. "Won' yo' go 'long with me, Mary Louise?"

Mary Louise was tempted. She had never seen a real, "sure-nough" play, and it was certainly her duty to improve her mind for the benefit of her intellectual lover—even at the expense of poor Washington Lee. She yielded.

The theater was dark when they entered. The

tiny electric torch in the hands of an usher guided them to their seats on the aisle in the gallery, and instantly Mary Louise's escort became absorbed in the play. Not so the girl. The whisperings and rustlings of those all about her, whom she could not see, made an infinitely greater appeal to her imagination than the pictured life on the stage. She speculated on what kind of people were to be found in this atmosphere of culture, peered curiously through the gloom, trying to pick out faces. A steady whispering in front of her caught and held her attention. She leaned forward, frankly listening. The little man's head was close to that of the taller woman, and the first words told Mary

Louise that they were of her own race.

"Yo' ain' abs'lutely no good, Devil, but yo' is a fascinatin' man."

"Don't you say that to me, 'Scilla. It's cruel! You know, I'se—I am more fond of you than words can—can 'lucidate."

"Devil, I don' believe one word, not a word! Didn' yo' make up to that rich girl w'ich own a sto' on Fifth Avenue? Now didn' yo'?"

"She was just an ignorant colored person from down in Virginia I tried to show a good time to, in my capacity as professional entertainer for the Royal Imperial. You *know* that I only love you!"

Strange lights were beginning to dance before Mary Louise's eyes. She tried to persuade herself that it was nothing but an awful nightmare. The voices went on remorselessly, however.

"Yo'se a liar, Devil, jus' a liar! How much all this love yo' talk 'bout 'mount to?"

"I'll tell you," came the ardent whisper. "Eisten!"

"Sweet, thou hast trod on my heart,
One of a world full of men.
I ask only this 'fore we part:
If you wish——"

The act came to an end. The lights snapped on. Voices rose to a conversational level. Mary Louise, ashy gray with fury, leaned to her escort.

"Washin'ton, yo' beat that niggah in front of me on the haid! Yo' heah me?"

"What fo' I beat that li'f niggah?" demanded the man in vast surprise. "He ain' done nothin' to me."

"Yo' do as I say!" furiously insisted Mary Louise. "He's—he's engage' to me."

Duval Wilson and his companion turned at the sound of the raised voices behind them, and the features of the

former professional entertainer of the Royal Imperial faded from black to a light chocolate, as he faced Mary Louise. A mighty hand shot out, clutched him, and raised him from his seat.

"Yo' would steal mah girl!" ejaculated a furious voice.

Outside the theater, whence they had been ignominiously ejected, Washington Lee firmly clutched his companion's arm, and swiftly guided her the short distance to her boarding house. Once within, he released his hold and broke into speech.

"Yo' no-'count culled girl, yo'! Yo' engage yo'self to a li'f yaller no-good gobber of a niggah!"

"He's got mo' brains than yo' got in yo' whole body in his li'l' fingah!" interrupted Mary Louise. "Intellechal brains!"

"Don' yo' talk no intellechal brains to me, yo'—yo' ign'rant fiel' han'!"

Smack! It was Mary Louise's hand against her lover's cheek. Quick as a flash, two great hands caught and shook her till the world whirled.

"Intellechal brains!" he repeated, finally releasing her. "Don' let me heah no mo' o' *them*! Yo'se my woman, Mary Louise!"

Dizzy, shaken to the depths of her being, the girl gazed at him. Then something gave way within her.

"I reckon I is," she said, and found herself in her lover's arms.

"Your fiancé seems to be a good, strong boy," said Miss Virginia the next Sunday morning, as Mary Louise swept her hair with a preliminary stroke of the comb. "He wasn't at all what I expected, though. I was rather afraid that you were going to marry one of these 'no-'count,' Northern colored boys. I don't quite understand about his being a professor. He told me that he was a contractor."



"Fiametta, Inc." saves a home. Side lights on human nature and morals from the vantage point of the beauty parlor.

THE way I used to look at it was this—that the vampire was a lot better than she was painted. I used to say that she was considerable more sinned against than sinnin', an' that the wives who let vampires vamp them out of what was comin' to them by rights, were dubs, plain mutts. I used to say in them dear, dead days that are no more, that the wives were in the game with all the good cards, if they'd only take the trouble to learn how to play them. They was with them—with their husbands, I mean—all the time, when they was sick an' when they was well, when they was flush an' when they was lean in the wallet. They—the wives—could make home attractive like the colyums in the paper used to tell them how, and if they didn't, they was stupid or lazy or most likely both.

Oh, yes, I admit it! Sittin' there at the little desk—that was a secondhand golden oak till I got busy with a can of swell green enamel paint an' a stencil—an' watchin' the women all come into my shop, an' goin' smilin' toward

them an' askin' them what I could do for them, I used to think a lot better of the sirens than of the wives.

The vamps, of course, was better customers to my line of trade. That may of had something to do with it, I myself bein' but human. Everybody feels kind-hearted toward their bread and butter. I don't pretend to be in the beauty business just because it hurts my eyes to look at women with hair like a bunch of waste and chins like a bowl of jelly. I'm in it for the money it brings in, an' it was only nature that I should think all the good I could of them that went in heaviest for my arts. An' the vamps, like I've said, are a lot more help to a strugglin' young beauty parlor than the married women, who think that the whole business of a happy married life has been cinched, when a husband has been led defenseless away from the altar.

Well, then along comes this war, an' Mr. Ledrick, who's been my gentleman friend ever since I was in the manicurin' parlor at MacReddy an' Stein's, an' who

is aisle man there in shoes, he said we'd better not put off gettin' married any longer, or that the army'd probably reach out a long arm an' get him. He's a fine, athaletic chap, lookin' as if he played his twenty-seven holes twice a week, when all the exercise he really gets is wavin' dames to the settees where the sales persons take off their shoes an' leave them sittin' an' coolin' their feet by the hour. Or it was. He's taken more since—but that was the chief part of his physical exercise in the old days. Complexions like his are deceivin'. He didn't need no beauty-parlor treatments.

Well, we was married, though we hadn't put by more than half of what we intended to have laid up for startin' housekeepin'.

My views on vampires an' victims didn't change much at first, though I suppose the virus of bein' a wife was workin' in me, quiet an' unbeknownst all the time. But one night, we an' Joe went to a meetin' an' we see some pictures—Belgians they was, an' bein' driven off from their homes. One of my customers give me the tickets. Well, you'll never believe me, but when we come out of that hall, we was both sayin' to each other "got to go." He was sayin' to me: "Hannah"—Hannah's my name, though the gilt letters outside the shop say "Fiametta, Inc."—"Hannah," he was sayin', "I got to go." An' I was sayin' to him: "Joe, Joe, you got to go!" An' I was babblin' some more stuff about how I could manage till he come back, an' he was sayin' things about me bein' the best little woman ever.

Well, that's neither here nor there, what he said. Nor what I said I'd do. He enlisted—it was before the draft. I did manage till he come home—pretty near as good as when he went over. Only his left arm— And it might of been his right, or a leg—or blinded. When I think what it might of been, I get faint all over.

But, after he had gone, an' I began to think about them Frenchwomen, really skilled vamps from all what I have read or heard about them, an' when I began to think how good he'd look alongside of any Frenchman I ever heard tell of, with his height an' his shoulders an' that athaletic complexion of his—why, I began to think better of wives. We hadn't been able to give up the lease on the flat when he went, an' when I'd break a finger nail on the dumb-waiter door, or when I'd been too dog tired after I had washed up the dishes at night to cold cream my face, I began to see wives an' vamps different from what I had seen them.

An' then, one day, a real sweet young woman came in to the shop to have her nails did. Her husband was with her, an' they was a nice pair an' they laughed a lot an' she was very happy. They were in our neighborhood only by chance—had been up to the hospital on the hill to see a sick friend—didn't often get out our way, they said. An' the manicure was a bet he was paying her. Oh, it was all very nice an' larky, an' she told me that he was eatin' his heart out about not bein' able to go across, but he'd been turned down on account of a flat foot. Some people do have the luck! An' I told her about Joe, an' we was all very cozy together. An' they drifted off an' I never expected to see them again. Well, I never did, either—not to call it "them." But it wasn't two months before he come driftin' in one day with one of my vamp customers.

I knew her well enough for what she was, an' I liked her well enough, at that. She took three facials a week, an' was havin' her hair treated with henna, besides manicures, an' she was always ready to try a new salve or skin food or rouge or hairbrush. She was a good customer, Miss Maude Caruthers. Sometimes she was on the stage, she said—but not while I knew her, an' had

the doin' of her. She had been hard hit by the war. Two of her best friends had been caught. I don't mean that they was unwillin', but merely that they had gone. The old one, a judge he was, was all the time in Washington, an' the young one had been sent over across. So, when I got her alone in the facial chair that day, an' said to her: "What are you doin' with the new one, dearie?" An' she answered: "Good gracious, Fiametta! A girl has got to live, hasn't she?" I couldn't deny the truth of it.

But I kept thinkin' about his pretty little wife, an' her pride in him, an' their jokes an' bets, an' all that. An' I took to kind of studyin' him—oh, yes, I had the chance! He was always hangin' around Maudie Caruthers, an' her apartment was in the same buildin' with my little box of a shop. An' she was one of the kind who think it cunnin' to take their gentlemen friends into make-up parlors with them, an' to say: "Now I'm goin' to be made pretty! Is oo glad I'se goin' to be made pretty—pittiest girl on the road for oo?" He thought it was cunnin', too!

Well, studyin' him an' piecin' out my studies with some things that she told me, I figured it like this—he wasn't all to the bad. He was new to N'York—just like Joe was new to Paris that very minute! He was travelin' with a sort of a fast set—men that wouldn't think they was men if they didn't have more than one rent check to draw every month. He wanted to be as big a fellow, as big a devil of a fellow, as any of them. An' then, she was good lookin' an' lively—an' it seemed the little wife lived out in a suburb somewhere, an' she was expectin' a baby, an' she had grown dopy an' droopy an' teary, an' he had kind of a raw deal at home, for the time bein'. An' then, besides, Maudie was a good looker—there wasn't any question about that. An'

lively! She was the right kind of a vampire, if you're goin' to have vampires at all. She held up her end, if you get what I mean.

But I kept thinkin' about Joe an' them French dames. An' the little wife. An' all my old ideas on the right of sirens to live their own lives went by the board. An' I got real peeved at seein' that young fool always dangle in Maudie's train.

It wasn't professional, what I done. I ain't tryin' to justify it. A true artist wouldn't of done it. A true artist would of held that art ain't got nothin' to do with morality, an' would have left Maudie's victim to get out of her nets the best way he could. A true artist would of just gone on workin' as well as she knew how on Maudie's hair and complexion, an' would of left the rest to fate or the government or something like that.

But I couldn't! I kept thinkin' of Joe—an' them French sirens, though Joe swears he didn't see a good-lookin' Frenchwoman all the time he was over, an' says he don't care for their style, anyhow! An' so—

It was unprofessional. It was the rough work of one who can no longer claim the title of artist. But—

In six treatments I turned Maudie's hair green. Very gradual I done it—"intermediate tintin'" I called it, when she was restive an' troubled about the way the henna was actin'. It *was* intermediate tintin', all right. But the last stage was bright green!

He fairly fled from her when he saw her the last time. It made her skin a kind of sickly color, too.

She said she was goin' to sue me. But she won't! She's got too much pride to want to make herself the laughin' stock of the newspaper boys.

He went back to his wife with a rush.

It wasn't true art, but I done it for the sanctity of the home.

"Something Old *and* Something New"

By Kay Cleaver Strahan

Author of "That Little Town," "The Dimity Dress," etc.

ILLUSTRATED BY SILVEY RAY

**The story of Elly Witherspoon's marriage,
which was not quite according to schedule.**

IT would have been evident to the most uncritical bystander, had there been such a one, that the committee on reception that spring morning, when Elly Witherspoon arrived in the world, was either grossly ignorant of the elements of its duties or unforgivably lax in the performance of them. She was greeted confusedly, wrapped in something handy, as unceremoniously as a Chautauqua lecturer from a late train is bundled into a hack at Squeedunk Station, and, despite her indignant protests, ignored, while the reception committee gave its entire attention to the welcoming of her twin sister, who arrived half an hour later.

Mr. and Mrs. Witherspoon had yearned for a boy; but they had planned, by way of solace, should "it" be a girl, the stately name of Elizabeth. Their powers of invention having been prostrated by the advent of two girls, they now yielded nothing better than a suggestion for a division of the name. To Elly, because of her precedence that morning, fell the unattractive share of Eliza, while the sister received the more euphonious Beth. Later, the harsh syllable was softened to Elly, leaving her with a diminutive of half a name.

Because, during their babyhood, it was Elly who was referred to, not always without a touch of opprobrium, as the husky one—the term was merely comparative; Elly was not then, nor ever, husky—it was Beth who obtained the lavish parental concern. In conse-

quence of which, perhaps, it was Beth who, when pneumonia overtook the pair at the age of three, was unable to survive it.

Then, had the long-hoped-for son not appeared, Elly might have taken her place as the spoiled darling of the Witherspoon household. But the son did appear, was duly christened and impeded for life with the name of Wentworth Montague, and Elly's small nose, already beginning to show dismaying propensities toward the paternal snub-biness, was permanently disjoined.

When she was six years old, she was sent to Cedarberg's public school. Her teachers neither liked nor disliked her; her report cards never flaunted an excellent, never cringed with a failure; she was an inch too tall for the honor of leading the marching lines into the building, and many inches too short for the whispering securities of the rear positions. In brief, at so early an age, mediocrity had claimed her.

She was to go through life as she went through Main Street in the Fourth of July parades: sitting in the Liberty car—because of Mr. Witherspoon's position as president of the bank—one of the many stiffly starched, red-white-and-blue-sashed States, with but an occasional mild jolt to disturb her complacent satisfaction.

Not until she was ten years old did Elly's stolid little soul quicken with the high aspirations which are so often the curse of the unexceptional. And

then, her dreams for her own glorification were set in a distant future, and in an event, the probability of which, in a Western State where the male population vastly outnumbered the female, was, practically, a certainty; so they brought no present discontent and made no impossible demands from a sluggish imagination.

Truly, it has been a mistake to use the plural form; for the desire which came to the little girl that June day, as she sat beside her mother in one of

which to the sentimentally minded might have seemed pathetic, had it not been so propitious, she had accepted the inhibitions inherited, achieved, and thrust upon her.

Mrs. Witherspoon lacked the submissive humility possessed by her daughter. Mr. Witherspoon's sister—Madge's mother—in gray silk, proudly beaming over a huge bouquet of violets and asparagus tops, had been exasperatingly prominent at the wedding. So, when Elly approached her mother that



Elly whispered to her mother: "Mamma, is my face dirty? Walter Cogswell keeps staring at me so oddly."

the front pews of the Presbyterian church, and watched her cousin Madge trail, in confident dignity, up the center aisle to meet a blushing bridegroom at the altar, was simply, some time, to do likewise; to wear many yards of superfluous white satin and tulle; to carry white carnations dripping with snowdrops, and to stand at that same altar a resplendently shimmering bride.

For Wentworth, bulging in white velvet and bearing the ring on a pillow, for her two cousins, Elva and Alice, following the bride with long, pink-stockinged legs which chattered with fright at each forward step, she had no twinge of jealousy. With a meekness,

evening with a timid question as to whether she might, when she grew up, have a wedding like Madge's, Mrs. Witherspoon replied:

"Certainly you may! I think it is every girl's right."

"Honest?" Elly gasped, and then, hurriedly forestalling a rebuke, "I mean, will you promise?"

"Yes," Mrs. Witherspoon answered abstractedly—she was busy with the peevish Wentworth's buttons. "Yes, of course."

So it came into being, her dream—a harmless and not unusual fancy for a small girl; but, as the years went on, no other dreams, no other ambitions,

came to join it. True, it was her constant consolation, an ever-ready anodyne for slights and slurs, a Lethe in which a heartsick little wallflower could drown her humiliations. True, it supplied her with the Christian attributes of meekness, patience, and belief in ultimate justice, more thoroughly than did the minister's long and erudite Sunday-morning sermons. But, as she grew older, it expanded; it became an obsession, a retardative, an octopus, which sucked into its greedy self the normal hopes and ambitions of adolescence. A home, a sweetheart, babies, a career—all these it devoured in their nascency.

At sixteen, she was graduated from Cedarberg's high school. Her slippers achingly tight, her small head with its big ribbon bow scarcely showing between the shoulders of those in front of her, she listened to the reading of an honor roll, in which her name was not included. Then, her diploma received and neatly framed, her organdie dress hung in its bag in her closet, her father's half-hearted offer of further education refused, she settled down at home to wait, not for the prince charming, but for her wedding day.

In the "hope chest," which had been a graduation gift from her mother, she displayed but scanty interest until she discovered that it would occasionally, with the plea of inferior qualities of materials offered by Cedarberg, afford her a shopping trip to the city. There, in the stores, she would spend the afternoons which other girls gave to matinees in looking at white satin and tulle and point laces. She brought samples home with her, hid them where other girls would have hidden their love letters, and brooded over them in luxuriously lonely moments. She read the accounts of weddings published in the Cedarberg Gazette and in the city papers, as other girls read love stories and love poems. And Mrs. Witherspoon, her promise long forgotten, wor-

ried in secret, and, sometimes, after Elly's eighteenth birthday, to a public of Mr. Witherspoon and Wentworth, because Elly was indifferent to boys.

As unfailingly as he directed to the city board of charities, thirty miles distant, all tramps who appealed to him for aid, Mr. Witherspoon dismissed all of his wife's worries, concerning any subject, with the expletive, "Nonsense!" And Wentworth, a bit more brutally frank than even a younger brother's prerogatives permit, sneered suggestions advising an inversion of statement, if his mother were seeking accuracy. His unpopular and, as he said, mud-homely, sister was a severe trial to the king of the Witherspoons' realms.

Elly was not beautiful, but neither was she homely. Her figure was slight and graceful. A trace of shortsightedness during her childhood had induced an overzealous oculist to fit her large blue eyes with neat, gold-rimmed glasses, which she still wore as punctiliously as a nun wears her rosary. Her hair was soft and fine and abundant; colorless, yes, but care could have made it lovely. And the short upper lip, perfectly bowed, meeting the sweet, straight serenity of the lower lip, distracted attention from the snubby nose. Anæmia had robbed her cheeks of their rightful rosiness, but the slightest deviation from the tidy pattern of her life would rouse them daintily, if fleetingly.

They were becomingly flushed on the afternoon of her twentieth birthday. Mr. Witherspoon had made the occasion an excuse for the purchase of a long-coveted automobile; and, with him and her mother and brother, Elly went into Price & Cogswell's garage to inspect the gift that was to be no more exclusively hers than was the table in the dining room at home.

Walter Cogswell, his overalls grimy, his hands oily, but his big, good-natured face pinkly, almost vividly, clean, came forward to meet them. Walter did

not belong to Cedarberg's younger social set, which, because of Mr. Witherspoon's position, included Elly in its invitational lists. He might have belonged to it—Cedarberg was vociferously democratic in its regard for eligible young men—but, since the father's death had interrupted the son's education in day school, Walter had been too busy attending night school, supporting his mother, paying her doctor's bills and her funeral expenses, saving money to buy his partnership in the garage, and traveling in a suit of olive drab to France, and back again, to devote much time to frivolities.

While he was explaining the intricacies of the machine's engine to Mr. Witherspoon, Elly whispered to her mother:

"Mamma, is my face dirty? Walter Cogswell keeps staring at me so oddly."

Mrs. Witherspoon gave her a hasty, critical glance.

"No, your face is rather red, but you're all right. I didn't see him staring. You must have imagined it."

That she had not imagined it was proved by Walter, three months later, when the family, having finally discovered that his frequent calls were not made because of his interest in the new car, had gone for a ride in it, leaving him and Elly alone to combat as they could the heat of the July evening.

"Elly," he began, "Elly, I love you! When you came into the garage that day, I knew that you were the girl in the world for me. I must have loved you all my life, not knowing, for love as big as mine can't come in a minute." He paused and cleared his throat, so removing some of the huskiness, but none of the gentleness, none of the eager tenderness from his deep voice. "Pretty-sweet," he went on, "do you suppose you could ever love me enough to marry me, and let me try to make you happy?"

"Yes, Walter," she answered, "I will marry you, if you want me to."

For weeks she had known that he would ask her to marry him. The knowledge had required no prophetic skill, no keenness of intuition for its attainment; Walter was Walter, and with him, what her mother termed "marked attentions" could lead to but one goal. Anticipation and a sort of passive impatience had pillaged from the present moment all possible excitement, thrills, or raptures. Now, she had a consciousness of a profound gratitude, but of nothing else. At the end of her journey up the aisle of the church, convention had decreed that a male figure in evening clothes must be waiting to receive her. Walter had offered to accept the post. It was very kind of him.

"Next June," she replied to his fervent question, "and in the Presbyterian church."

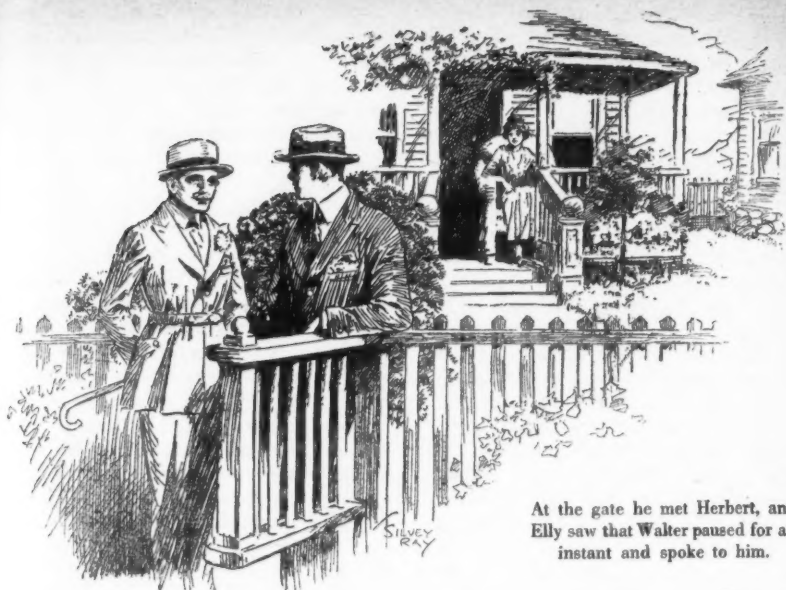
"But, pretty-sweet," he protested. "June! That's a year from now."

"I won't be married in any month but June," she declared; and to the decision she clung with the amazing strength of stubbornness which natures habitually yielding and gentle occasionally display.

From that evening Elly's lips, unsealed at last, could speak of nothing but her wedding. Silent all her life, she became suddenly garrulous, and her family, and even Walter, accepted the transformation as symptomatic of her love for him. The truth, that her words were a necessary, though scanty, outlet for her mind, teeming and turgid with details and plans, which one and all were truncated by the departure of the final guest from the reception that was to be given at home after the church ceremony, presented itself to no one.

Over and over again her sedulous thoughts decorated the church and gowned herself and her attendants. Over and over again she arranged the setting for the reception which was to prolong her triumph. No particular escaped her.

"Something Old and Something New"



At the gate he met Herbert, and Elly saw that Walter paused for an instant and spoke to him.

By August she had perfected her picture, down to the definite "Something old and something new, something borrowed and something blue," to be worn by herself to assure her happiness. And to all her requests her father and mother, grown suddenly and perhaps a bit remorsefully indulgent, consented.

Harassed salespeople in the city grew to know her and to dread her as a shopper who wasted hours of time and never reached a decision. But, at last, in April, she and her mother purchased the yards of shimmering white satin and visited the modiste who, because of her high courage when it came to overcharging, was ranked as the ablest in the city.

That evening, during dinner, Wentworth interrupted Elly's eulogies with a question addressed to his father.

"If I'm going to be an usher, isn't it about time I was ordering my dress suit?" And then, to Elly, "Where's Walt having his made?"

"I don't know," she answered. "I'll ask him this evening."

When Walter came, she asked him the question quite casually. From the first, his position as a faultlessly attired bridegroom, waiting for her at the altar, had been to her mind as incontrovertible as was the location of the Presbyterian church on the corner of Sixth and Lincoln Streets.

"Why, pretty-sweet," he answered, "I hadn't thought of a dress suit."

"Well, you *should* think of it," she answered irritably. "Wentworth is going in to-morrow to order his from Lane's, and you'd better get off and go in with him."

"I have my blue serge," Walter began. "That's almost new——"

"Don't be ridiculous!" Her soft voice shrilled high with indignation. "Blue serge at my wedding! What would people think? How would it sound in *The Gazette* the next day: 'The bride wore an elaborate robe of

heavy ivory satin, cut with a court train of silver brocade. The tulle veil was held in place with a crown of rose-point lace and orange blossoms. The groom wore blue serge?"

"You never said you didn't like that suit," he fumbled, "when I wore it to the dances."

"It was all right for them!" No patience modulated her shrillness. "None of the boys dress for the parties here. But for my *wedding!*"

Her use, for the second time, of the singular pronoun, halted the march of his thoughts. He sat staring at her silently, almost stupidly.

"To think," she went on, "that you'd be willing to ruin all my plans!"

"No," he interrupted her gently, "but I'm afraid I can't afford to spend a couple of hundred dollars for a new outfit right now. You see, I paid cash for the bungalow, and I've got to keep enough put aside for the furniture. Then there's our little trip."

"We'll give up the trip," she decided instantly and positively.

Give up their honeymoon, their time away from the world and alone together, for a suit of clothes he should never put on again!

Incredulity came first, followed by a smothering sense of pain; and then his love and loyalty sped to the rescue. It was not, he explained to himself, that she cared less about the honeymoon; it was that she cared more about his proper appearance. Women, he supposed, were like that. Well, he would manage it somehow. He wouldn't spoil her happy plans by being mean over a few dollars. He could borrow the money from Otis Price, if he had to.

"I wouldn't," he began, "give up our trip, not on any—"

"Then we will give up the wedding."

"You mean——" he began. "You don't mean that unless I get a dress suit you won't marry me!"

"I do mean exactly that."

"You mean," he repeated with the bitter, careful patience of a person who is arranging the shroud of a loved one, "that you would marry me if I were wearing a black suit and a white shirt front, but that you wouldn't marry me if I had on a blue serge suit and a high-cut vest?"

"Yes, I do mean that."

"Then you don't love me. You've never loved me! You don't know anything about love!" He walked slowly away from her, across the room, and at the door he paused. "Think it over, pretty-sweet," he said. "You are tired to-night. I'll come to-morrow evening."

"No," said Elly the following evening—a day's reflection had at least shown her the advisability of changing the issue from a costume to a principle—"if you don't love me enough to do that little thing for me; no!"

"You are saying," he again insisted with the same dreadful patience, "that you won't marry me if I wear blue serge?"

"If you don't love me enough to dress properly for my wedding, I won't marry you. No!"

"Pretty-sweet," he answered, "I love you enough to do anything in God's world for you! I love you too much to marry you when you don't love me."

"Love," said Elly, "comes—develops after marriage, mamma says."

"Maybe," he answered, "for the men who are beasts enough to risk it. I'm not. Your happiness is too precious!" He got to his feet, tripped over a hassock on the way to the door, and was gone before she had found a word for answer.

"I won't," she snarled through set teeth at a startled mother the next morning, "I won't, *won't* give up my wedding! Walter Cogswell isn't the only man in town. You wait and see. I'm going right on with my plans. I'm going to the city to-day for my fittings. You wait and see!"

When a girl, reasonably attractive, her social position secure, her charms enhanced by the distinction and the mystery of a broken engagement, sets herself deliberately to seek a husband, it is not often that she fails. And Elly's quest was greatly facilitated by the simplicity of her requirements: the man who should stand waiting for her at the altar must be wearing evening clothes. In May, the Cedarberg Gazette carried the announcement of the engagement of Miss Eliza Witherspoon to Mr. Herbert Murcer.

Here, dramatic possibilities shall have to be sacrificed for authenticity. Not by any far-reaching imagination could Herbert Murcer be cast in the rôle of a villain. He owned the Brier Rose Ice Cream Parlor, clerked in it, and was as mild as the milk-shakes which he served—a viceless and virtueless, middle-aged man, who parted his minute mustache in the middle, used jockey-club perfume, and wore bottle-green, belted suits. His proposal to Elly had been preceded by proposals to a dozen or more other girls in the past ten years. Domesticity appealed to him. He disliked having to live in the Esmond House, Cedarberg's second-rate hotel, and he hated the meals served in its musty dining room. So, when spring came each year, fresheting his shallow soul with romance, he proposed, on bended knee and in flowery language, to any girl who happened to be conveniently at hand. The fact that not one of these girls had ever been heard to boast of the honor he had conferred upon her may serve as a final, summarizing, descriptive bit for Mr. Murcer.

The evening of the day on which her engagement had been publicly announced, Elly, drooping in a porch chair, waiting for the graceful Herbert, looked up to see the more bulky figure of Walter striding toward her. For the first time on his account, her heart missed a beat.

"Elly," he began, dispensing with all preliminaries, "do you love Herb Murcer?"

Elly had not gone through the campaign of husband-winning, mild as it had been, without receiving a few scars.

"Very dearly," she recited glibly.

"Would you marry him if he wore blue serge?"

"Mr. Murcer will, of course, wear the conventional black," she partially quoted. And perhaps it was that which robbed her voice of any tinge of triumph.

"Pretty-sweet," he answered, not looking at her, but at the red-clover bloom he was twirling in his fingers, "he may wear a dress suit at the wedding, but remember, he won't be wearing it on cold winter mornings when the furnace won't draw right, nor late at night when the baby has——"

"How," she gasped, "how dare you talk like that to me!"

"It just seemed," he apologized, "that I didn't dare not to. I—I had to know that you love him!"

"I do." But her words were less of an assertion than a protest, a barrier she was trying to thrust between herself and him, with his searching eyes. "I do indeed."

He turned then and left her. At the gate he met Herbert, and Elly saw that Walter paused for an instant and spoke to him.

"What did Walt say to you?" she inquired, as Herbert came up the porch steps.

"Told me to be good to you," he answered, and laughed. It was merely a neurotic mannerism of his, that giggle with which he terminated most of his statements, but in this moment, it ripped through Elly's nerves like sharp scissors through crisp silk. Would he laugh like that, she wondered, on cold winter mornings when the furnace refused to draw? Or late at night when— This conclusion she refused with a little

shiver, which she attributed to chilliness, and which gave her an excuse for leading Herbert into the house and into the family circle.

Time after time, with a monotonous sense of duty, Mrs. Witherspoon had essayed timid rappings on the doors in her daughter's mind, which Elly kept, though not consciously, so tightly closed on all of her vistas of the future; rappings as effectual as the tappings of a sparrow's beak on a prison door. To Elly, such couplings of words as "wifely duty," "wifely forbearance," "responsibilities of motherhood," were but doubtfully proper components of her mother's vocabulary. Walter's two prosaic statements had been different. They had not opened the doors wide, but they had unbolted them, leaving them so that a chance laugh or phrase, a remark of a married friend, a scene in the moving pictures, might swing them slightly ajar; and, as the gentle May days scuttled away before the advance of a voluptuous June, Elly found increasing difficulty in slamming those doors, with their frightening revelations, shut, and in keeping them so.

The invitations, offering a satisfactory roughness of surface to the most critical finger tips, had been issued, undamming a steady stream which later swelled to a deluge of cut-glass bowls, silver chafing dishes, and earving sets. In the guest room, her wedding dress, swathed and reswathed in sheets, hung from the center chandelier like a gibbeted ghost. And, in her white bed, with the wedding but two days distant, Elly, a trembling bundle of collapsing nerves and exhausted physical strength, tortured by the terrors of an objectless fear, sobbed herself to sleep.

Then, although she would have declared that she had not closed her eyes, she found herself sitting bolt upright, trying hazily to account for the fact that a cannon had been discharged in the lower hall. An instant, and she

realized that it was Wentworth who had come in and slammed the front door and who was now pounding up the stairs. She glanced out of the window. The world was in that deathly gray hour that follows the night and precedes the dawn. Why, then, in the name of Heaven, was Wentworth employing none of his customary late-hour precautions?

She heard him go boldly into her mother's and father's room and switch on the light. Something, some dreadful thing must have happened! Her heart thumped in her throat; her chest ached with the fright of it.

"Sleeping here"—his shouted derision came clearly through the partitions—"like nuts in a shell, when the whole town has burned, and good old Walt's probably dead, and——"

Elly jumped from her bed and stumbled through the darkness into the lighted room.

"What Walt?" she demanded. "Walt who?"

Wentworth turned to her and found in venomous tirade a vent for some of his excitement.

"Ye'a, you'd better ask Walt who? Walt Cogswell, that's who! Did you ever hear of him? And you'll feel fine at your fine wedding, and Herb wearing his fine dress suit, if old Walt's funeral comes off on the same day! It's all your fault! If Walt dies, it's all your fault. You—you jilt!"

For a moment she teetered limply, and then, impelled by some extraneous force, she shot across the room and seized her brother's shoulders and shook him backward and forward, a small hurricane buffeting a scarecrow.

"Tell me!" she shrieked. "Tell me about Walt! Tell me! Tell me!"

"Children! Children!" gasped Mrs. Witherspoon.

"Elly," commanded Mr. Witherspoon, "stop that! Stop it, I say, instantly!" And as Elly, her strength exhausted,

succumbed to her mother's reaching, restraining arms, "Now, Wentworth, you tell us as quickly as possible what has happened."

"Well, it was burning——"

"What was burning? Stop that whining!"

"The Esmond House, I said. The fire started down at The Fashion cleaning place, and swept clear around the block to the Esmond House. Walt and I were standing there, across the street, when up came Herb, crazy as a loon, his nightshirt hanging out in the back and everything, and, 'Hell!' he said, 'my dress suit's up there, and the wedding day after tomorrow.'"

"Well, then Walt asked him to point out his room, and he did; third story up, on the corner. And when I found out what Walt was going to do, I tried to hold him, but Herb didn't help me, you bet. And Walt broke away from me, and 'Elly sets so much store by it,' that's what he said, and was off, and I nor anybody could stop him."

"After a while, he stuck his head out of the window up there and threw down a package. I tell you, he'd taken time to tie it up in bed quilts and knot 'em. And I tell you, when Herb caught that package, he had the crust to open it right



"And Walt broke away from me, and 'Elly sets so much store by it,' that's what he said, and was off, and I nor anybody could stop him."

there. I'll say he did! And somebody had hollered that the stairs were gone. And Walt up there, burning to death, for all we knew, and Herb down there fussing over his package. I tell you, he shook it out and examined it, and then wrapped it up again like he was afraid it would catch cold in the night air. And everybody else going wild, for fear old Walt wouldn't be able to get out. And then Otis Price went in after him. And when he came carrying him

out——" Wentworth shuddered and closed his eyes, as if to shut out a sickening, horrible memory. "And then——oh, I tell you, when they put him into the ambulance to take him to the hospital—— Oh, I tell you—— Good old Walt!" he ended in an incoherent blubber.

Elly got down from the bed and walked to the door. She moved quickly, and yet her little figure, with the white gown hanging straight about it from her shoulders to her bare feet, seemed to be invested with a new and mature dignity.

"Elly," Mrs. Witherspoon questioned, "where are you going?"

"I am going to the hospital," she answered.

Mrs. Witherspoon followed her into her room. She was dressing swiftly, and to all her mother's objections she replied dully:

"Yes, I will go alone. Yes, I will go alone."

Her words may have signified nothing but the inability of a benumbed mind to cope with arguments. Or, it may be that they were the expressions of a mind alert, at last, to realities, and that she had discovered that life's deepest, farthest journeys must be made alone.

The city papers gave it a headline: "Romantic Wedding of Banker's Daughter to Hero Who Rescued Child From Flames."

The *Cedarberg Gazette* was mercifully brief in its account, merely informing a scandalized public that, on Wednesday, in Saint Mary's Hospital, the Reverend Ernest Baldwin had

joined Miss Eliza Witherspoon and Mr. Walter Cogswell in the holy bonds of matrimony.

It did not say that the bride had worn an old blue middy suit, selected because the simplicity of its buttons permitted a more speedy return to the hospital; it made no mention of the fact that the groom had worn the conventional hospital attire of white pajamas; nor did it state that immediately after the ceremony the bride had presented the groom with a thermometer, instructing him to be sure to keep it under his tongue, while she flitted away to make arrangements concerning the placing of an extra cot in his room.

But, because Doctor Featherstone had watched Elly's face during the ceremony and had seen something there, the *Gazette*, in another column, gave one more brief paragraph.

What the doctor had seen was a light, shining out from behind her eyes, still stretched wide with suffering, and shining through the chalky white mask of her face. During all his years of practice he had seldom seen that radiance, but, seeing it, he never failed to recognize it. It was the light of courage, of indomitableness; a light that glowed with divine obstinacy in the black face of fear; a light so valiantly imperishable in itself that it defied the possibility of extinction, and, so defying, wrought miracles and won the victory.

What the paragraph said was that Doctor Featherstone, who, until a late hour, had refused to make any statement concerning Mr. Cogswell's chances for recovery, had now, as the paper went to press, stated that he believed his patient was out of danger.







New York Stage Successes

“Irene”

A Musical Comedy

By James Montgomery

MUSIC BY HARRY TIERNEY

LYRICS BY JOSEPH MCCARTHY

Irene was a little beauty, with sharp wits—as became a daughter of the O'Hara's of Ninth Avenue—but the work at the great department store was exhausting, and poverty had already depressed her. Then along came a romantic adventure. How she became, in the words of her benefactor, “a veritable princess” is amusingly told in this popular comedy, with its fascinating songs and contagious music.

THE curtain rises upon the veranda of the beautiful country home of young Donald Marshall. His friend, Bob Harrison, in the silk and lace business, has stopped in for a chat.

DONALD: What's on your mind, Bob?

BOB: I want to ask your advice about a business matter. Maybe you can help me. I was in London a year and a half ago, buying goods for myself. While I

was there I did some business with Madame Lucy. I bought some models from her. She was making the very smartest gowns in London, although she hadn't arrived. I mean she wasn't well known or recognized. I talked to her about America and the wonderful prices women paid for clothes over here, and told her I believed she'd be a sensation in New York. You know how a fellow raves about his country over there.

DONALD: I understand.

By courtesy of the Author and the Producers.



Adele Rowland as Irene, the little Irish shopgirl.

BOB: Well, imagine my surprise about five months ago when I received a letter from Madame Lucy. She was in *New York*.

DONALD: Over here to see you?

BOB: No, no. She was here in business.

A little shop in the Fifties, near Fifth. History was repeating itself. Lord, she needed everything! I felt a sense of responsibility for her being over here, and I imported a lot of stuff for her. That was five months ago. She'd pay me if she could, but she hasn't got it. The other day I happened to think of your sister—she goes everywhere. If your sister would go to madame, she would turn out some gowns that would make this town sit up and take notice. Do you think she would help us?

DONALD: My sister and her husband left two weeks ago to spend a year in South America.

BOB: Well, that's the luck Madame Lucy has been playing in all along.

DONALD: I know so few girls I'm a bad one to help you. Does she owe you much money, Bob?

BOB: I wasn't thinking of that. Madame is a born artist in her business, and it's a shame the women don't know about her.

DONALD: If Madame Lucy made men's clothes, I'd give her my trade. Unfortunately, at present, there is no young lady whom I have the slightest excuse to buy clothes for. Don't think because I haven't suggested anything that I'm not interested. I am. We want to think of some way to attract the public's attention. (*Leads Bob into the house.*)

The Marshall veranda has recently been redecorated, and in response to a complaint that the seat cushions have been made too small, the store which supplied them has sent out an employee to investigate. Irene O'Dare, dressed in the cheap, shabby garb of a poor shopgirl, explains to Clarkson, the butler, that the cushions were made exactly according to measurements.

IRENE: But I see what you mean. They'll flatten out and be exactly right. If they were made larger now they would sag over here later on. We always made them this way. I think you'd better tell Mr. Marshall not to have them altered now, and if they are not right in a short time, the store will make him new ones.

CLARKSON: Maybe you're right. We didn't think of that.

IRENE: If you will tell him, please, I'll report to the department that you're satisfied. (*While she waits, LARRY HADLEY, a type of the idle-rich young man, enters in search of DONALD.*)

LARRY: Hello!

IRENE (*coolly*): Hello.

LARRY: Well, upon my soul! You little rascal, what are you doing here? Do you see what an impression you made upon me? How long has it been since that night in Philadelphia?

IRENE: Two years.

LARRY: I recognized you instantly. Where in the world did you go? We looked for you the next day, and you had disappeared. What was that other girl's name? (*IRENE is silent.*) Oh, it doesn't matter. Why did you run off just as we were getting along so well, eh?

IRENE: Oh, never mind. I had a good reason.

LARRY: You're just the same little girl, though. I was crazy about you. You're too pretty to work in a store. That night I left you I thought you had come to your senses. (*Drawing her to a settee*) Come on, sit down here. (*Trying to embrace her*) I've thought of you so many times.

IRENE (*shaking him off*): Let go of me. Gee, you've got the busiest hands!

LARRY: Everything will be all right. (*He grabs her in his arms and tries to kiss her.*)

IRENE (*getting her hand under his chin and throwing his head back*): You fresh stiff!

LARRY (*with a closer hold on her*): Oh, that's your little game, eh? You're a little tiger, eh? (*In the struggle IRENE becomes quite out of breath. DONALD enters, and LARRY instantly releases her.*)

DONALD: Hello, Larry. What does this mean? Do you know this young lady?

LARRY: In a way, yes.

IRENE: He tried to get fresh, the sneak! It's lucky for him he didn't get something he wouldn't forget.

DONALD: Well?

LARRY: I've nothing to say. I don't know that it's *your* affair.

DONALD: Then allow me to tell you that it is. I am responsible for this young lady while she is here.

LARRY: Oh, that's the way it is? I didn't know that. I wanted to see you on business, but of course I see now that I dropped in at a very inopportune moment. Please pardon me. Good afternoon, young lady. (*Exits.*)

DONALD (*turning to IRENE, who seems about to faint, and offering her a chair*): Your nerves are unstrung. Sit here quietly until you feel better. I'm very sorry that this happened.

IRENE (*weakly*): Oh, it's nothing. Maybe I was to blame. I won't say anything.



Irene transformed into a charming society girl.

The minute you get near enough to a man nowadays, he makes a grab for you. I guess the dancing craze may have something to do with it. The thing that gets me is: I wonder if I look like that? I guess I must. (*She begins to cry nervously.*)



IRENE: Let go of me. Gee, you've got the busiest hands!

ously.) Gee! That man was strong. I guess it's just as well you came in.

DONALD: I'm very sorry. He's always been a friend of mine. How well do you know him?

IRENE: You'd have thought I knew him pretty well, wouldn't you? I just met him once, two years ago in Philadelphia.

DONALD: I feel that I owe you something for the shock you have suffered.

IRENE: It wasn't your fault, sir.

DONALD (*having summoned the butler*): Clarkson, see if there is any candy in the house—and get some roses—and have a car ready at the same time. Do you live in the city, Miss—

And Irene, led on by Donald's kindly interest, divulges the story of her poor young life, her home on noisy Ninth Avenue, and her work at the store. Her father is dead, her little brother still in school, and she herself the family breadwinner.

DONALD: You should be very proud. There is a great pleasure in work, isn't there?

IRENE: Oh, yes. I wouldn't miss a day—they'd take it out on Saturday night.

DONALD: Maybe you won't always work in the store.

IRENE (*quickly*): You mean I may get fired?

DONALD: Oh, no; but maybe you'll get married some day.

IRENE: Married? Gee! I'd have to find some one who could take care of my mother and my brother. I can't desert them now. And what chance have I got to meet a man like that? Not a chance in the world. The men we meet can just support themselves. They marry some girl and she has to keep on working and be his wife into the bargain. That's fierce. One fellow in the store married one of the girls two weeks ago and let her quit work. But every day since I've caught him reading a book, "How a Woman Can Earn Money at Home." Gee! I'm talking too much, I guess. That's because I'm so excited. Mother says I never know when to stop.

DONALD: No, no, not at all. I like to hear you talk. It's very interesting.

IRENE: I like to talk. I'll bet you would have laughed at me if you had known me when I first went to work. Gee, I didn't know a thing! I went to work first in the Philadelphia store. Father was alive then and I could use my money for myself, and I wanted to be away from home, too. I really didn't, but I thought I did. I got sick of it in two weeks, but I wouldn't give in and say so. I got six a week. Two dollars went for a little room about a mile from the store, fifteen cents for my breakfast in a bakery, fifteen for lunch, a quarter for a regular dinner, and forty cents for laundry. Sometimes on Friday morning I'd have a dime left and I'd buy six bananas—you know, the little bits of ones—and I'd eat three on the way to work and three for lunch. I was ready for murder. Then I'd have to borrow ten cents from one of the girls, and I'd go to a Greek's near where I lived. He liked me and used to give me an extra big dish of rice pudding for a dime. Oh, I'd be so hungry, and I'd see roast beef and steaks and everything, and I'd make up

my mind to ask the Greek to lend me a quarter, and I'd call him, "Oh, Tony!" and he'd come over and say, "What is it, little girl?" and then I'd lose my nerve and say, "Oh, never mind now," or something like that, and I'd just be starving. I hooked my pin and a ring and my dress-suit case, everything I had. Oh, it was terrible! I was hungry all the time. I didn't know any one until the night I happened to meet that fellow.

DONALD: Please go on. Tell me how you met him.

IRENE: Well, one day as I was walking home—it was near the end of the week and I was broke again—all of a sudden I heard some one call, "Oh, Irene!" And I turned around and saw a girl who used to live near us on Ninth Avenue. I passed right by her and didn't know her—my, but she looked stunning!—a dress all trimmed with fur the same as her hat, everything the very best. She was just getting into a limousine when she saw me. Oh, she looked beautiful, and she was awful glad to see me and wanted to know what I was doing and all that. "Come with me," she said, and wouldn't take no for an answer. I tried to tell her how terrible I looked, but she just pushed me into the limousine and we drove to a wonderful apartment. When we got upstairs I couldn't *believe* it—six or seven rooms, lovely furniture and rugs, and closets full of clothes, and hats and shoes! Gee, she was swell! Then she ordered dinner right up there. Oh, wasn't I hungry, and it tasted so good! Then a gentleman friend of hers called and right away he paid a lot of attention to me. I guess she didn't like that very much, so she made him telephone for a friend of his, and he came. That was this fellow—what's his name?

DONALD: Hadley.

IRENE: That's it. And we four went to the theater. We had a great time and some more to eat. She teased me to stay with her that night and I did. I had to get up at six o'clock in the morning to get to work. Oh, I was so tired and that bed was so comfortable! And she kept saying to me, "Oh, you're a fool to work! Stay here and I'll fix it for you." And I kept saying to myself,

"Will I or won't I, will I or won't I?" I just closed my eyes for a minute to think, and the next thing I knew it was twelve o'clock and I'd lost my job. She telephoned the boys, and gave me the sweetest little Alice-blue dress that cost eighty-five dollars, and a pair of shoes and a hat and everything. Gee, I looked as swell as she did! Then the boys came and took us for a ride. Oh, I was so happy! We went to the theater again, and then I told her I wanted to go home and think things over for myself, and she made my fellow take me home in a taxi. When he said good night to me he gave me a twenty-dollar bill. I took it because she told me to if he did. When I got upstairs there was a telegram from home—my father had died that morning. Gee, I didn't stop to pack! I didn't have anything to pack with. I ran all the



DONALD: These are for you, Miss O'Dare.

way to the station and just caught a train for New York. I guess it was lucky that fellow gave me the twenty dollars or I wouldn't have had any money to buy a ticket. Things just happen that way sometimes, don't they? Gee, I made that dress last a long time! I guess I'll never have another like that. My, I wish you could have seen me in that Alice-blue dress that cost eighty-five dollars! It made me look a lot different. You must think I'm crazy,

telling you all these things. If some of the girls at the store saw me now they'd wonder what I was doing, wouldn't they?

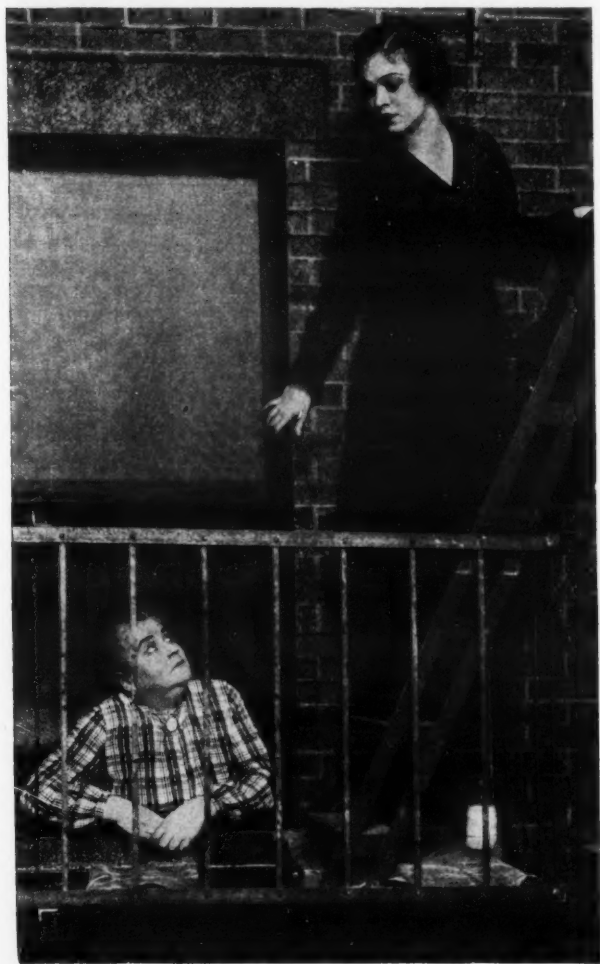
DONALD: Do you think so? I think you are a very interesting young lady.

IRENE: Do you? Well, *you're* interesting, too, even if you don't talk as much as I do. We girls don't meet many men like you. I know girls who are lots of fun, pretty, beautiful, but they never meet the right kind of men at all. I bet you there are a lot of

men who would like to meet them. But we couldn't go out with them because we ain't got any decent clothes to wear. Clothes make an awful difference in a girl, and just because we ain't got them, don't think we don't know about them. Gee, I talk careless—we all talk that way—but you wouldn't know us when we put on airs. Honest, we can talk and act like real ladies. It's not as difficult as it sounds. We take off the swell customers who come to the store, and you can't tell the difference.

DONALD: Is that so?

IRENE: But the trouble is you can't practice it where I live. They'd murder you. They'd think you was crazy or stuck up. We never get a chance to talk to anybody about anything that means something. Some Sundays I've gone to church four times and prayed for a little money, a little opportunity. Oh, if you knew how we girls are handicapped! We can't get out and show ourselves to those who might want to see us. We'll never get out of the rut we



MRS. O'DARE: Where are you going, Irene?

are in. Oh, gee! I didn't mean to tell you all my troubles. I certainly am the gabby one, ain't I?

DONALD: I imagine clothes *do* make a lot of difference.

IRENE: Oh, it's *terrible* how much difference they make!

While Irene sings wistfully of her "little Alice-blue gown," an idea occurs to Donald. He insists upon her staying for dinner, meantime bestowing upon her a box of candy and an armful of roses.

IRENE: Oh, ain't they beautiful? How did you know I loved flowers? It's a lot of candy, isn't it? My little brother won't ask me where I got it, but my mother will.

DONALD: Tell her the truth.

IRENE: Oh, she wouldn't believe that! If I told her the truth, she'd be down here asking you about your intentions. I'll explain them somehow.

DONALD: I wonder how you would look in a dress that cost two or three hundred dollars. Miss O'Dare, you're a great little girl. And I'm going to tell you how to get out of the rut you are in. You'll get out of it some day yourself, or you wouldn't have the ideas you have, but what you want now is new environment, new surroundings, an opportunity to develop yourself.

IRENE: I don't get your game at all. You seem like a real feller, and I hope you ain't going along like this and then all of a sudden—spring something.

DONALD: Don't worry about me. It's what you've told me, Miss O'Dare. That's what I'm interested in.

And Donald, forthwith, divulges his plan, which includes Madame Lucy as well as Irene and two of her friends.

DONALD: If she is one half as clever as I've heard she is, and you looked as well as you say you did in the eighty-five dollar dress, you should be a great combination. How would you like to go to her?

IRENE: What would I have to do? I'll do it—but what? Mother won't let me do anything I mustn't.

DONALD: You're just to be a little lady; that's all, a little lady.

IRENE (*changing her entire manner and using a clear English diction*): Oh, Mr.



Mrs. MARSHALL: Do I understand that you are Madame Lucy?

Marshall! It's been so refreshing to chat with you for this half hour. The time has slipped by so rapidly.

DONALD (*delighted*): That's simply immense! In two days Madame Lucy will transform you. Wait until you see what she will do for you. Frocks and gowns, hats and boots and slippers—she'll make you a little princess, a little Cinderella.

Up the fire escape at the rear of the O'Dare apartment on Ninth Avenue, Irene hurries to her friends, Helen Cheston and Jane Gilmour, two girls who work at the store with her. Her flight is suddenly halted by the voice of her mother, who appears at the window.

Mrs. O'DARE: Where did you say you got the flowers and candy, Irene?

IRENE: From the manager at the store.



Jane

Madame Lucy

Helen

MADAME LUCY: If you girls get fresh, I'll fire both of you. I must draw the line somewhere. If I didn't, my business would go straight to the bow-wows.

He offered a prize to the smartest girl in our department, and that was the prize.

MRS. O'DARE (*skeptically*): Oh, he *did*?

IRENE: Yes— But I want to leave the store.

MRS. O'DARE: What for? For being the smartest girl in your department?

IRENE: No—but it just proves to me that there isn't any chance for a girl at the store. You see—I *can* go to work for a dressmaker, or a milliner, or something like that.

MRS. O'DARE: No, sirce, young lady! You can save your breath for something else. I'll put my foot on that at once. I wouldn't

allow you to do that any more than I'd allow your little brother Johnny to be a paying teller in a bank. A human being should never get accustomed to what they haven't got. That's what the girl on the floor below did. She was a model for clothes and hats. It was her ruin. She got used to fine feathers and wanted to be a fine bird. Well, from all I hear, that's what she turned out to be—a bird.

IRENE (*disappointed*): All right, mother. You know best.

But to Helen and Jane, Irene relates

her adventure and paints a picture of the dazzling future offered to them to become models for Madame Lucy.

Two days later Donald sees Bob.

DONALD: After to-day I'm going to turn the entire thing over to you. I've found some girls—and if Madame Lucy is half as good a dressmaker as you think she is, she'll become established all right!

BOB: Well, that's wonderful! It's a great scheme.

DONALD: I went up to see her yesterday. Why didn't you tell me Madame Lucy was a man?

BOB: It didn't occur to me. You see, Madame is just a trade name. He's a regular fellow. Certainly I didn't dream you'd call on Madame.

CLARKSON (*entering*): There's a man out here, sir. He said for me to tell you he is Madame Lucy. (*Bob goes before the artistic young modiste is ushered in. MADAME LUCY is dapper and extremely graceful.*)

MADAME LUCY: Oh, hello! I'm so happy to see you again, Mr. Marshall.

DONALD: How are you, Madame? Mr. Harrison said some very complimentary things about you the other day. He tells me you are a wonderful dressmaker.

MADAME LUCY: Well, if I do have to say it myself, I think I'm the greatest dressmaker in the world. Of course you must understand, Mr. Marshall, that in my business dresses and gowns must be seen to be appreciated. Some dressmakers are fortunate enough to have customers who are on the go every minute. Well, you can just imagine what a wonderful advertisement they become for a shop.

DONALD: I can readily see that they would. As I told you yesterday, we'll get you two or three young ladies, and you'll dress them up as only *you* know how to do.

MADAME LUCY: That's simply music to my ears! Mr. Marshall—

DONALD: Now don't thank me again, but that's why I asked you to come here—to meet them. Madame Lucy, do you know that in department stores, in offices, among the working girls are many pretty, beautiful young ladies? They are beautiful even in the poor little dresses they can afford. How would they look in one of *your* gowns, slippers, hats, furs—all the things you know of to enhance their simple beauty?

MADAME LUCY: They might look terrible.



"And we're getting away with it—whoops, they'll never know!"

DONALD: Would you want a customer more attractive than Miss O'Dare?

MADAME LUCY: Oh, well, that's entirely different. *She is exceptional.*

DONALD: There are thousands like her. The pearl remains inside the oyster until some one opens it. How is Miss O'Dare going to turn out?

MADAME LUCY: My dear man, you just wait until you see her. You have great perception—you are really brilliant. She will be here soon. You'll simply just be amazed, that's all — positively amazed. (CLARKSON announces MISS CHESTON and MISS GILMOUR.)

DONALD: Miss O'Dare has found you these two customers. You look them over and, if you think they'll do, offer them twenty-five dollars a week. Try it for a month, anyway.

MADAME LUCY: Oh, Mr. Marshall, you've just taken me off my feet! Oh, you are so generous!

DONALD: Now don't thank me. If things go well, you can pay me back.

MADAME LUCY: But I feel I must let you know how grateful I am.

Helen and Jane enter. They are dressed in their shop clothes, are shy and awkward, and greatly impressed with the ele-

gance of their surroundings. Madame Lucy studies them rather hopelessly, but, remembering that "anything is possible," explains the nature of their new work, adding that he will make them "the

talk of the town." Follows a lesson in walking, dancing, and the cultivation of a manner both dignified and debonair, that is extremely amusing. Bob, suddenly appearing in the doorway, accosts Donald.

Bob (*horrified*): You don't mean that you are crazy enough to imagine that those two girls could wear Madame Lucy's clothes? They'd look *terrible*. They have to have style, manner, breeding inborn.

DONALD: Oh, I suppose if you were set down among strangers, in rags, that your inborn breeding would show itself to every one?

Bob: I don't know anything about that, but good clothes would simply show them up. They've got to be the real thing, the *real thing*. Does Madame Lucy believe he can make them look like anything?

DONALD: Apparently.

And at that moment Miss



"Irene: A little bit of salt and sweetness."



Bob: Irene, you look perfectly stunning to-night. Madame Lucy has made you a perfect peach.

O'Dare is announced. Dressed in an exquisite afternoon frock, hatted, booted, and gloved in a striking manner, Irene is radiantly beautiful. Donald introduces Bob, who, unaware of Irene's identity, is openly impressed by her beauty and charm. Other acquaintances of the Marshalls arrive, among them one J. P. Bowden, a rich social climber. He, too, is impressed by Irene and hastily seeks out Donald.

BOWDEN: What O'Dare is that?

DONALD: The O'Dares.

BOWDEN: You don't mean it—well, well, well! This is a surprise! (*Hastens back to IRENE, who has already become the queen of a little court.*)

BOB (*crossing to DONALD*): I thought you said you didn't know any girls.

DONALD: I forgot about her.

BOB: *Forgot her?* How could you forget a girl like that? Now *that* is what I mean

by the real thing. Can't you see the difference? Blood will tell every time.

BOWDEN (*leading IRENE to settee*): Miss O'Dare, won't you sit here a moment?

BOB (*arranging cushions for her*): I say, Don, they've made these seat cushions all wrong. They're not wide enough. Don't you think so, Miss O'Dare?

IRENE: If they have been recently done, in all probability they will flatten somewhat, and then I should say they would be just about right.

BOB (*delighted*): By Jove! How did you think of that? It takes a girl to figure that out. (*Aside to DONALD*) Oh—oo! She's a dream. She has a mind like a whip. Did you notice how quickly she figured out about that cushion?

DONALD: She's a marvel!

BOB (*turning to IRENE*): Will you pardon a little genuine enthusiasm? I think you are the cleverest and the loveliest little lady I've ever met in all my life.

BOWDEN: In all *your* life? You're not old

enough to make that a compliment. Miss O'Dare is the most captivating little lady I have ever met.

DONALD: I don't want to discredit you boys, but I think she's the greatest little thoroughbred in the world!

IRENE (*curtsying*): Gentlemen, I thank you.

To a ball at Bowden's magnificent home, two months later, Madame Lucy and her three models are invited. Early in the evening, Irene is discovered on the fire escape talking to Helen and Jane.

IRENE: You girls go on. I'll meet you at Madame's. I must say good-by to mother—she's awfully suspicious to-night. The rent was due three days ago and I had the money right on time. That never happened before. Then I got Madame to give me a dress for mother—you know, at cost—and a hat. I told mother I got them cheap at the store because I used to work there. Oh, she is so suspicious! I was only trying to make her happy. If she ever catches us!

HELEN: Don't worry. We'll all stick to the same story: we are posing for artists.

IRENE: Oh, dear, if we ever have any daughters, can you imagine them putting anything over on us?

MRS. O'DARE (*appearing at the window*): Where are you going to-night, Irene?

IRENE: To a movie.

MRS. O'DARE: What time will you get home?

IRENE: Early. And I'll sleep with Jane.

MRS. O'DARE: Oh, dear! Oh, dear! I don't understand at all. Things are so mysterious. Everything was all right when you worked at the store.

IRENE: Mother, dear, I don't want things to be mysterious. I don't want to keep things from you. Before I left the store I begged you to allow me to work for a dressmaker. It was a great opportunity for me.

MRS. O'DARE: Stop right where you are. You never can do that!

IRENE: So I became an artist's model.

MRS. O'DARE: But you've changed so. You talk different, you're getting stylish—

IRENE: Oh, mother, Jane went to college. You should be glad that she is kind enough to teach us. Just think how she has increased my vocabulary!

MRS. O'DARE: If she can talk any better than you can, she's a wonder.

IRENE: Instead of being pleased that I am getting along, and that I can buy a dress for you, you seem to be sorry for it. Aren't you glad my work is easier?

MRS. O'DARE: Skip along with you. Sure! I want you to have some pleasure. Good night, Irene. Be a good girl.

Eleanor Worth, a young woman upon whom Donald's aristocratic mother looks with favor, Mrs. Marshall herself, and Larry Hadley are among the guests at Bowden's ball.

MRS. MARSHALL (*to LARRY*): Eleanor and all her friends seem to have lost their heads over this new modiste, Madame Lucy. However, I've made up my mind to go to her, though I know she's frightfully expensive.

ELEANOR: You'll never go anywhere else.

LARRY: Eleanor means you won't have any money left to go anywhere else.

MRS. MARSHALL: There are several young ladies here to-night with whom Eleanor seems to have formed quite a friendship. Miss Cheston is a beautiful dancer. She is a young lady Eleanor met at Madame Lucy's. Her people must be very well to do, judging by the way she dresses.

ELEANOR (*looking off left*): And there's Miss Gilmour. She went to Vassar. And, oh, there's Miss O'Dare! (*Great applause and chatter. DONALD and BOB enter.*)

MRS. MARSHALL: Oh, Donald, I want to speak to you. This young lady who is here this evening—Miss O'Dare—do you know her family?

DONALD: I wouldn't say intimately. I believe she lives with her mother and brother. Where does she live, Bob?

BOB: Why do you ask me? I don't know anything about it.

MRS. MARSHALL: We are very proud of our family, Robert. Donald, Miss O'Dare comes of a great and noble line of ancestors. The name is of great antiquity. It is a very distinguished family. (*Referring to a scroll she carries*) This sketch of the O'Dares was completed this afternoon. You see—the coat of arms! (*Reading*) The O'Dare family was founded by Michael Comac Cas O'Dare, son of the King of Munster, A. D. one hundred and seventy-seven.

DONALD: Well, what do you think of that?

MRS. MARSHALL: The O'Dare tribe owned all the vast territory occupied by the other clans of Tara—the O'Connells, the O'Briens, and the O'Haras. That surprises you, doesn't it?

DONALD: We didn't dream of it.

BOB: Is that authentic?

MRS. MARSHALL: Authentic! I paid the genealogical society five hundred dollars for it!

DONALD: What do you ask for when you want one of these things?

MRS. MARSHALL: I requested them to furnish me with a sketch of the O'Dare family, and offered to pay them five hundred dollars for it if it was satisfactory. I want you to pass it on to Miss O'Dare. Ask her to pardon the apparent presumption on my part, but the first time I saw her I knew she was an aristocrat. But remember, I must be given the privilege of introducing her as one of the O'Dares of Ireland.

Later Donald presents the scroll to Irene.

DONALD: It's your—your—er—family tree. They have discovered that you come from a very old family.

IRENE: Well, there's no need to let any one know it, is there? They haven't discovered that I came from the store?

DONALD: No. (*Handing her the scroll*) It's yours. Take it home.

IRENE: What would mother say to that? Maybe it's something like a character—like a recommendation: from one store to another?

DONALD: That's it. A thing like this is very valuable. It backs up any claim a family may make. It is very important.

IRENE: Important? In some families I should say it was an absolute necessity. But I've taken home so many things that have been difficult to explain—I wouldn't know what to say about this. Please tell your mother how glad I am that they didn't find out the truth.

DONALD: They'll never find out now. You've made good and I'm proud of you. What do you think of us? Have you been disappointed?

IRENE: Oh, no! I would be ungrateful if I were. You're all right. But I'm ready to take another step forward. Oh, yes, I am! I've got to.

DONALD: What do you mean, Irene?

IRENE: Oh, I don't know what I mean. You wouldn't understand. You see, you don't know me very well—I'm not the same with you as I am with other men—I can't pretend with you—you know what I was. I've tried to think what you thought of me masquerading—that's what it is. Whenever I've thought of you I've always wished I was not masquerading—I've always wished it was real. (*Suddenly embarrassed, reads from scroll*) Michael Comac Cas O'Dare—the O'Connells, the O'Briens, the O'Haras—that would please mother—and see—Shamus—Schaun—Michael! And here's poetry. "Irene, a little bit of salt and sweetness"—I wonder who wrote all that? Sure, it's just like a fairy tale and I'm in it. (*She sings the lovely song, "IRENE."*)

It is evident that Donald's scheme has succeeded. Madame Lucy's triumph has been instantaneous and tremendous,



DONALD: Put them on. It will make me happy—won't you please?



*Helen and Jane pause abruptly at sight of Mrs. O'Dare.
MRS. O'DARE: So you are all here, are you?*

with all society flocking to his shop, and the magazines showing sketches of his gowns and hailing him as the greatest artist-dressmaker in the world. Hardly recognizable, with their new clothes and new manners, Helen and Jane have been "getting away with it" in great style, their frocks described and their doings discussed everywhere. Irene, however, has been the bright, particular star of the plot, becoming such a popular belle that Bob Harrison is constrained to consult Donald in regard to Bowden's obvious interest in her. Donald resents the suggestion.

BOB: Do you know anything about pearls? (Taking jewel box from his pocket) These are pearls—worth sixty thousand dollars. Yesterday Bowden came to me, thinking I

knew about these things, and asked me to select a string of pearls for him. I brought him two. He took the other one—worth fifty thousand.

DONALD: What's this got to do with me?

BOB: Bowden, in a burst of confidence, told me he had bought them for Irene. I know Bowden. He's going to ask her to marry him.

DONALD: That's absurd!

BOB: No, it isn't. Ever since you introduced them he's been with her constantly—I've seen them every place in town. We are responsible for Irene meeting Bowden. He's a social climber—you know how careful he is in the choice of his friends—and if he should marry Irene and the world should find out that she was a shopgirl, he'd put the blame on us.

DONALD: Irene isn't a shopgirl.

BOB: Well, she was. How far would you let it go?

DONALD: It's none of our business. As a matter of fact, I never heard any one rave over a girl as you did the day you first met her.

BOB: But that was before you told me who she was.

DONALD: That's it. If Bowden is in love with her, it proves what I have always thought: he's a smart man. He took her at her face value and *knew* she was a lady. We know she was a shopgirl—that's where we are wrong. Do you think Irene loves Bowden?

BOB: He's worth several millions. He can give her anything she ever read of in a fairy story. Any girl would love that.

Meantime Bowden lays his heart and worldly possessions at Irene's feet. Not unmindful of the honor, she hesitates. Bowden begs her to take time to consider and, although his gift of pearls is refused, he finally persuades her to put them on to show to her friends.

After midnight, two sleepless mothers appear at their windows in the rear of a tenement on Ninth Avenue.

MRS. CHESTON: Is Irene home, Mrs. O'Dare?

MRS. O'DARE: No, she's sleeping with Jane.

MRS. CHESTON: The same as Helen.

MRS. O'DARE: Irene's posing for an artist now.

MRS. CHESTON: Same as Helen.

MRS. O'DARE: The hours at the

store were hard on Irene—but, as a matter of fact, the hours are much longer now. There artists paint a lot, don't they? Irene says they sketch at night and paint in the daytime. However, that one can explain anything if you give her a chance to talk. Irene's artist gave her a prize for her first picture—seventy-five dollars.

MRS. CHESTON: The same as Helen.

MRS. O'DARE: Come just in the nick of time for the rent. She got another prize. She bought me a dress and hat with that money—at least she calls it a hat. She's the prize girl.

MRS. CHESTON: Here's a painting of



MRS. O'DARE: Get out of that, you Nancy! Irene, what kind of a man is this?

Helen. She posed for the cover of this magazine. (*Throws it down to Mrs. O'DARE.*)

MRS. O'DARE: This is not Helen! It's Irene! She told me so.

MRS. CHESTON: Well, I know it's Helen because she told me she posed for it. Are you sure it's the same magazine?

MRS. O'DARE: I'm sure! Well, now what do you think of that—the lying little divvils! Knock on Jane's door. (*Investigation proves disturbing.*)

MRS. CHESTON: Helen's not there, nor Jane—none of them! What do you think?

MRS. O'DARE: I can't think. Oh, if I had my hands on her now!

MRS. CHESTON: Irene has such an influence over Helen. Irene left the store, so did Helen. Irene went to pose for an artist, so did Helen. Irene began to stay out at night, so did Helen—

MRS. O'DARE: Stop right where you are, Mrs. Cheston. That one of yours can't be led where she's not willing to go. (*Finds folded invitation in magazine.*) Ha, ha, here's an invite or something of the kind! "Mr. James Pierson Bowden requests the pleasure of Helen Cheston's company—" An invite to a ball, or a shindig of some sort, that's taking place to-night.

MRS. CHESTON: What are you going to do?

MRS. O'DARE (*tearing cover off magazine*): I don't know. You stay here, and if they come in, take charge of your Helen, bring Irene down here, and send that scalawag Jane off by herself. I'm going out. If Irene's in this city to-night, I'm going to find her!

An hour later the guests at the ball are singing, "Oh, the last part of every party is the real part—the best of all!" when Larry suddenly recalls Irene, with whom he has danced during the evening, divines her real identity, and informs his interested host just who she is. Bowden is dumfounded.

BOWDEN: Irene O'Dare a shopgirl! It's incomprehensible! What does it mean?

LARRY: Well, as long as you ask me, it can mean only one thing. Marshall has fallen in love with the girl, dressed her up, and then, maybe not realizing what he was doing, he's foisted her upon his friends.

BOWDEN (*aghast*): And less than half an hour ago I asked her to be my— Nothing! Nothing! Careful! (*IRENE has entered.*) Oh, Miss O'Dare, we were just talking of you. Do you know Mr. Hadley?

IRENE (*with outward calm*): Yes, I know Mr. Hadley.

BOWDEN: By the way, I saw a clasp on a string of pearls to-night that is a much later pattern than this. What do you say if I have this one replaced?

IRENE (*taking off pearls*): By all means, Mr. Bowden.

BOWDEN (*after LARRY has gone*): Mr. Hadley didn't recognize you at once.

IRENE: It was soon enough.

BOWDEN: I also met you at Donald Marshall's. It must have been quite difficult for you to get in your present surroundings.

IRENE: You ought to know just how difficult, Mr. Bowden.

BOWDEN: Now, don't be cross—I won't tell. You know what people would say.

IRENE: They won't get a chance to say anything. I suppose a great man like you would lose your reputation being seen with a girl like me. Well, I'd like to have you hear what my mother would say if she knew I was with the likes of you! (*DONALD enters in time to hear this speech. He notices that IRENE no longer wears the pearls. As soon as BOWDEN withdraws, DONALD secures the other pearls from BOB and approaches IRENE, who sits dazed.*)

IRENE: No—no! Do you suppose I'm crying for them?

DONALD: These are not the same ones. These are yours. Please take them.

IRENE: No, no!

DONALD: It will make me happy—won't you, please?

IRENE: Of course I will—to please you. (*Takes pearls and puts them on.*) They're prettier, anyway. You treat me just like a child, don't you?

DONALD: Haven't you ever thought of how I felt toward you, Irene?

IRENE: I've thought, but I've never arrived at any very pleasant answers.

DONALD: That day when you walked on to the veranda, you walked into my life. I didn't realize it. I saw you change day by day from what you were to a little princess. I watched you in a dream, unable to speak.

IRENE: Would you mind saying that all over again? No—I'll remember it, but don't tell me any more. I'm afraid to hear the last part of anything that has such a beautiful beginning.

DONALD: If you only loved me!

IRENE: Yes, that's it—if I only did! Well, that's life. You always look so stern—you're a cross-looking man. Not now, but you ought to see yourself sometimes. I've tried hard enough not to love you—you did *everything* for me.





DONALD: Will you marry me?

IRENE: Good gracious! When?

DONALD: To-night—to-morrow. (*Kissing her*) Why, you're trembling, Irene.

IRENE: Who wouldn't—after what you just did? (*She suddenly hears a familiar voice.*) Oh-o-o! (*MRS. O'DARE, dressed in the gown and hat IRENE bought her, enters excitedly.*)

MRS. O'DARE: Oh, here you are, young lady! Glory be to goodness, but you do look beautiful! Where did you get those clothes?

IRENE: Sh! Mother! (*Turning to DONALD*) This is Mr. Marshall, mother.

DONALD: I've known your daughter for some time, Mrs. O'Dare.

MRS. O'DARE: Well, it will be some time before you know her again! Wait until I get you home, young lady! So you went to a movie, eh?

DONALD: Mrs. O'Dare, I have asked your daughter to marry me. I want to marry her to-night or to-morrow.

MRS. O'DARE: What talk have you! Be off, or I'll call a policeman.

IRENE: You're talking to a man now, mother.

DONALD: Mrs. O'Dare, I am very proud to know you.

MRS. O'DARE: Well, why the devil shouldn't you be proud to know me?

DONALD: Let's be friends. I love your daughter—and she loves me.

MRS. O'DARE: How do you know?

DONALD: I have her word for it.

MRS. O'DARE: Well, of course, if you want to count on *that*! Young man, I'll tell you something that will send one of your kind off scurrying. My daughter, a month ago, was a shopgirl, and that's where she belongs, and that's where she's going back to! Now I guess you ain't so anxious to marry her.

DONALD: It makes no difference to me. I love her.

IRENE: You'd better let us have our way. You know me, mother.

MRS. O'DARE: Hold your tongue. (*To DONALD*) I don't know what to say. (*Pause.*)

Well, then, all right. Young man, you don't know what you're asking for. I feel as though I was playing a trick on you. (*To IRENE*) Where did you get the beads?

IRENE: They are pearls. Mr. Marshall gave them to me. (*HELEN and JANE come dancing in, pausing abruptly at sight of MRS. O'DARE.*)

MRS. O'DARE: So you are all here, are you?

HELEN: Oh, did you see the lovely pearls Mr. Bowden gave Irene?

MRS. O'DARE (*scathingly to IRENE*): Who gave them to her? Sure, the truth is not in you! Come here, Helen. (*Takes cover of magazine from her bosom.*) You see this picture? Your mother says you told her you posed for it. Is that the truth?

HELEN: Of course it's the truth.

MRS. O'DARE (*to IRENE*): Ah! Now, my fine young lady, get out of this if you can. You told me you posed for it.

IRENE (*who has been thinking hard*): We both posed for it, mother, dear. It's a composite picture. It's Helen's nose and mouth, and my hair and eyes.

MRS. O'DARE: Sure, there's no stumping you! Jane, come here. Tell me where Irene bought me this dress.

JANE: She bought it at the store where she used to work. (*MADAME LUCY enters.*)

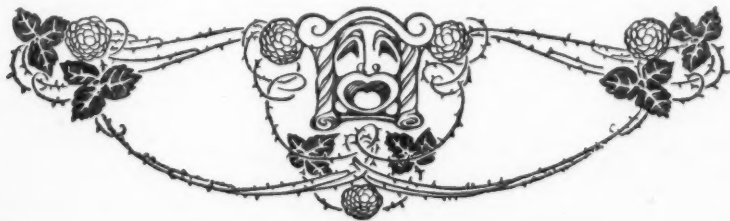
DONALD: Mrs. O'Dare, I want you to meet Madame Lucy.

MRS. O'DARE: The saints preserve us! Who did you say?

MADAME LUCY: Oh, I know Mrs. O'Dare. Her daughter ordered this gown from my shop. (*Drops to his knees and adjusts folds of gown.*)

MRS. O'DARE: Get out of that, you Nancy! Irene, what kind of a man is this? (*Looks at JANE.*) Sure, you're as bad as the rest of them!

The last dance of the evening finds Irene in Donald's arms, with a merry crowd singing "Something in the Air."



The Single Code

By Leigh Gordon Giltner

Author of "The Tungsten Trail," "The Sport of Chance," etc.

ILLUSTRATED BY LAURA E. FOSTER

In which a woman, whose married life has been a failure, finds herself.

LINDA lighted a cigarette. Cowan stared at her in a sort of fascinated amazement, so far forgetting the tragic quality of the moment as to gasp:

"Why, I didn't know you went in for smoking, Lynn."

She smiled faintly.

"I don't. I'm very much the tyro, as you see. But I'm learning, Max. I've found it necessary to learn—oh, a number of things, of late."

"Meaning to be cynical, I take it. I don't fancy the pose."

"Meaning *not* to be melodramatic, *mon cher*. I'm trying to meet the situation sanely and sensibly."

"You're succeeding," he conceded curtly. "You take it almost casually."

"What did you expect?" she queried calmly. "You see, I've had time to get used to it."

"You mean," he said a trifle breathlessly, "that you've suspected——"

"I've *known*, dear chap. From the very first—even before you quite realized it yourself. That's a thing a woman senses intuitively. I haven't been blind, Max. I've seen your struggle—for I'll admit you didn't yield without putting up a fight—and I've guessed from the start what the end would be."

He looked at her dazedly.

"But you've gone on much as usual, Linda. You didn't accuse or reproach me."

She shook her head.

"What good would it have done? How could it possibly have helped? Recriminations aren't at all in my line, you'll admit."

"I'll grant you that, Lynn. You never nag."

"That's a worth-while tribute—after five years together. But in this case there wasn't much for me to do but simply wait, and waiting isn't the best thing I do. I'm glad you've spoken; glad to face the truth."

"You seem to be——" A faint bitterness underlay his tone.

"Sorry to disappoint you, Max, if you expected a scene. But I'm not much given to scenic effects, you know. I suppose I might weep and wail and entreat you not to leave me, but what's the use? In all the plays and stories, in literature—or life, what use has it ever been for a woman to cry and cling and plead with a man who's grown tired of her? What has it ever gotten her except pity or contempt?" She laughed shortly. "Don't worry, Max! I'm not going to try anything like that. I shan't cling. I've my cue for a quick exit and there isn't a cling in my composition."

He gazed at her in some perplexity.

"You've changed, Lynn," he said slowly. "You've grown strangely hard. When I married you, you were all clinging tenderness and sweet dependence."

"That was five years ago, Max. Five years is a long time, and I haven't stood

still. Four years, even two years, earlier, I might perhaps have done the usual thing and cried and cringed and tried to 'hold' you. Fancy holding a man against his will! How utterly abject! Now, I hope I'm sufficiently poised and sophisticated to look at the matter sanely. It seems to me that the only dignified course for a wife who—who has been supplanted, is to accept the situation, efface herself—and find an absorbing interest."

He glanced at her sharply.

"You've found yours, I take it?"

She nodded.

"An interest big and vital enough to keep my mind off—this."

"Is it," Cowan inquired unpleasantly, "is it, by any chance—er—Louis Athe-ling?"

She turned swiftly upon him.

"Don't be mofe of a cad than you can help, Max. This situation is not of my making! Because I accept it calmly and sensibly; because I'm trying to gather up the fragments of my broken life and 'carry on' as best I can, you dare——" She broke off with a laugh. "There! I'm being melodramatic, after all. I didn't mean to be. I don't want to quarrel with you, Max. I'm not even angry with you. I don't suppose you could have helped it really. Love comes; love goes. There's nothing we can do about it."

Maxfield Cowan frowned. He was disconcerted and a trifle chagrined. He had dreaded a trying scene; its failure to come off left him feeling a trifle dazed and blank. He had anticipated tears and recriminations; Linda's utter calm made him feel a little foolish. She was letting down the scene to a degree that was embarrassing.

"I shall give you a divorce, Max," she went on quietly. "I could, of course, hold on to what's left me—a mere matter of name and title—and make things hard for you. But I shan't. I want to give Nita the chance

I seem to have muffed—the chance to make you happy. You'd never be happy the other way. Hiding in out-of-the-way places, furtive, cringing, snubbed, and slighted—it would be horrible for you both, especially for Nita. You must marry her, Max, and give her a status. She's rather a nice little thing!"

Cowan could only stare. He was well-nigh stunned. To anticipate a dagger and meet an outstretched hand! Such generosity staggered him. Yet, incapable as he was of gauging its degree, he made the mistake of underestimating its inclusions.

"You—you really don't mind?" he hazarded tactlessly.

Linda laughed, not without bitterness.

"Not the least in the world! Naturally. What normal woman would at all mind being cast adrift, deposed for another, branded a failure in her life rôle? Well, I suppose it's my own fault, Max. I've failed; I must have failed. I've tried to make you happy, tried to give you a home that would be a haven, tried to be all you'd have me be, but evidently I've somehow fallen short."

That touched even Maxfield Cowan's self-centered nature.

"You haven't, Lynn," he protested. "You haven't really! You've been all that was fine—so fine that I can't even now understand."

"I can, Max. Nita is three years younger than I and many degrees prettier. Then, she has the charm of novelty—custom inevitably stales, you know—and the added fascination of the forbidden. I'm not blaming you, Max. Love's a variable quantity. Once gone, I doubt if anything can bring it back. I shan't make the mistake of trying."

He looked at her with admiration; her value appreciated, perhaps, with her withdrawal.

"Perhaps—if you tried——"



"Don't be more of a cad than you can help, Max. This situation is not of my making!"

"Don't weaken, Max. Don't be a weather vane. Try to keep my respect, if you can. Live down that weak, dimpled chin of yours. Go through as you've planned! It's always a mistake to reconsider after you've offered your resignation. Yours has been accepted unanimously; we won't go back of that."

"But I'm not so sure——"

"You should be! People are beginning to whisper. It isn't fair to Nita to

let matters drift any further."

"Should you"—he hesitated — "should you be willing to—er—to establish a residence?"

"Perfectly willing. I can go to Reno at once."

"You're a good sport, Lynn. I wish I had deserved you. I never did—or could! There's one thing more. About—er—your income. We won't call it alimony."

"Please don't. It doesn't sound pretty."

"What I'm trying to say is that I hope you'll let me make provision for you."

Linda considered for a moment; then:

"Why not?" she queried quietly. "Of course, in a play or a novel, I'd spurn the offer; as it is, I accept it gratefully. I have only a few thousands, you know, and until I get on my feet I may need your—no, it isn't a charity. I think I'm fairly en-

titled to it; though, with any luck, I may not have to take it. You're a rich man, Max; I shan't be robbing Nita."

"I wish you wouldn't be so damned considerate of Nita, Lynn. You make me feel like a hound."

"Quite sure I'm responsible for the sensation, Max? But, I didn't mean to be feline. I'm leaving to-night. I shan't see you again, but you can communicate with me at any time through my lawyers, Ames & Atheling."

Cowan opened his lips and quickly closed them.

"That's right, Max. Don't say it. It's worse than foolish. I shan't trouble to deny your insinuation about Louis Atheling—a friend of my childhood. It's not your affair, in any case. But I don't mind telling you that the interest I mentioned has nothing to do with what we call love. I'm through with that, I think. But I've my life to live, and if I can find something to make it seem worth while, why that's my right. Good-by, Max, and good luck!"

Smilingly she held out her hand. But he did not take it. Instead he stood looking down at her, a troubled incertitude in his eyes.

"Lynn, dear, I can't let you go like this!"

"Why not? Isn't it better than the usual 'Dearest, don't leave me, don't leave me! I can't bear it!' The business of clinging, with deep, rending sobs? I suppose I ought to be conventional and say I can't live without you, but it wouldn't be true, old dear. I can and I will!"

But when the door had closed, with dreadful finality, upon him and she heard the sound of his step grow faint and die out along the corridor, her gallant smile faded. She sank into a chair and laid her head down upon her arms as if she never cared to lift it again.

A twelvemonth is an infinitesimal fraction of time or an æon, according as one chances to look at it or live it. For Linda Cowan the year passed swiftly enough. After the first rending shock of separation, she had quickly adjusted herself to conditions and thrown herself into her work, which she wisely recognized as a saving grace for unhappiness.

She sold a story and repeated. A third, with a surer technique, yielded yet better returns. When she got back to New York she found her old friends

loyal, while new ones grew inevitably out of her literary interests.

A discriminating editor "saw a play" in her fourth story and interested himself to such purpose that Linda presently found herself "collaborating"—as he was polite enough to put it—with Haldane Power, a playwright with two Broadway successes to his credit. Linda surreptitiously pinched herself at intervals to assure her doubting soul that this was not a dream.

Of Maxfield Cowan and his movements she knew nothing. Her friends tactfully avoided all mention of him; she had returned half a dozen of his letters unopened; and though she supposed he had married Nita as soon as the decree was granted, she spared herself the pang of absolute certainty. Her one dread was that she might suddenly come face to face with them and, before she could control her expression, betray the hurt Max's defection had dealt her.

But, on the whole, she was happy. The play progressed apace, and a fine friendship sprang up between her and Power. At least, she rated it so at first. Later, she was less sure of the Platonic quality of her collaborator's regard, though he kept sedulously to the rôle of comrade only. Her work meant much to her. She grew and broadened with contact with the clever artists, authors, actors, and musicians her magnetic personality gathered about her. She was too busy, too broad, too sane and wholesome, to indulge in self-pity. Life was worth while, even without love.

And then—one day Max walked, unannounced, in upon her. For a moment the room seemed to whirl dizzily about her. Then she got herself together and, after a scarcely perceptible hesitation, heard her own voice saying:

"Why, really, Max! This is a surprise!"

Cowan's eyes, with a sort of hungry

wistfulness in their depths, clung to her piquant face.

"I suppose it is," he said harshly. "I fancy you flattered yourself you were rid of me for good and all!"

Linda managed a friendly smile.

"Let's not be personal, Max. Won't you sit down? Or—no! I don't want to seem inhospitable, but I'm afraid it wouldn't be quite conventional——"

"Hang the conventions!" he burst out roughly. "I've got to see you, to talk to you!"

"Is that necessary, Max? I don't think there's anything to be said between us."

"You're mistaken, Lynn. There's everything!"

"We've each of us fulfilled our promises. I've given you your freedom, with the proper legal stamp. You've sent me a monthly check—by the way, I've lately returned the lot of them, uncashed, to your lawyer. I appreciate your generosity, but, luckily, I didn't have to use your money."

"Oh, I've heard of your success! I congratulate you."

"Thank you; though I shouldn't call it success," she deprecated. "It's nothing at all spectacular; just a bare living—bread and butter without any jam, and this little nook to shelter in."

He glanced about him, grasping the general effect rather than the details of the artistically simple apartment.

"Lynn," he said heavily, "why should you hurt me by refusing to let me help you? Lord knows I wronged you enough!"

"*Au contraire*," she said quietly. "I sometimes think you did me a very great kindness. You helped me, among other things, to find myself."

Max looked his mystification.

"I don't mind owning, now that it's



"Give me a chance, Lynn!" he begged. "I'll wait—I'll

in the past tense, that I loved you quite insanely, Max. During the first four years of our married life I was as abjectly your slave as any odalisque. I cared for you enough to want to be just what you wished me to be. I was never myself. I did and said and was the things you were likely to want me to do and say and be. No sultana ever laid herself out more earnestly to please her lord."

"You succeeded."

"I failed. I wasn't an entity at all. I was just an echo of your views and thoughts. I lost my individuality; I didn't grow; I didn't even think, except in a reflex fashion. And then, as might have been expected, you tired of me and told me so. It was good for me, though not exactly pleasant. The



do anything, if you'll only promise to take me back!"

shock shook me out of my obsession and brought me to my senses."

"I trust you're grateful?" he rasped.

"Oh, very! I'm entirely contented, almost happy now! I'm tasting the delight of self-expression and what some one has called 'the joy of the job.' I manage to earn a livelihood of sorts and—and that's enough about me. What about you, Max, and—Nita?"

"Nothing much about me! Same old grind. I can tell you even less about Nita."

She turned a swift glance upon him.

"Max, you don't mean that you've—er—repeated? Aren't you rather getting the habit? Two divorces within a year——"

"Wait a moment! You're going too fast. There's been no divorce—*perhaps*

because there's been no marriage!"

"Max!"

"I—well, perhaps you were right, Lynn. There is a fascination about the forbidden, beyond a doubt. The things we can't get are always alluring. I wanted Nita like the devil as long as I thought I couldn't have her. When the bars were down—why—well, it was different."

"Then you didn't, you haven't——"

"No, and I shan't! We don't want this marriage, either of us. Even before the decree was granted, I'd discovered that! I wrote you half a dozen times begging you to call it off, but you fired the letters back unopened. I saw your lawyers and tried to get their consent to a stay of proceedings, but they refused."

"But, Nita——"

"Nita feels exactly as I do about it. It was the romance, the stealth, the glamour of it, that took her fancy. Lynn, dear, I wonder if you guessed what you were letting me in for? Nita is, as you once said, a nice little thing; but, frankly, she bores me to extinction. She's small-minded and narrow and selfish—and she *nags*! I know I'm talking like a cad, but I want you to understand!"

"Is it necessary that I should? It doesn't concern me!"

"I'd hoped it might, Lynn."

"Vain hope, dear boy. It's not that I'm resentful or angry or bitter. Its just that when love goes, you can't call it back any more than you can revive a dead flower. You killed my love, Max, and——"

"Don't say that, Lynn! Give me a chance! Let me try to win you back! I've known, almost from the first, that I'd made a mistake; that it was you I'd cared for all the time!"

She smiled a little bitterly, but she did not speak.

"I found I couldn't go on with that marriage stuff; so I got a—a stay of execution, so to speak, and went with Dahlgren to South Africa to hunt big game. But I couldn't get away from my memories of you, Lynn. Why, dearest, it was you all along—just *you!* Nita was just a fancy, a passing phase!"

"A pity, isn't it," Lynn said slowly, "that we always discover vital things like this when it's too late?"

"Is it too late, dear? Isn't there even a shadow of hope?"

Linda marveled that the pleading in his eyes should move her so little. She shook her head.

"I got home yesterday," Cowan went on. "I'd had time to think things over and I did what seemed to be the one square thing. I went to Nita, told her the straight truth, and—left it up to her."

"And she?"

Cowan smiled wryly.

"She was unflatteringly ready to give me up, though I'd told her I stood ready to go through, if she wished. And so——"

"And so, from force of habit, you've come to me for sympathy?"

"I came hoping for—something more," he said slowly; "but I suppose I'd no right to expect forgiveness. You've grown away from me, Linda, and the old love——"

"I'm afraid so, Max. If I should ever love again it would be on a different basis—as the comrade, the equal, not the mere plaything whose sole aim in life would be to please the fancy

of some man! A woman needs something in her life besides the love interest, just as a man does. Can you picture anything more abject than a creature whose helpless soul hangs upon the whim of another? Is it any wonder that a woman is apt to grow petty and splenetic when she has no individuality, no outside interests, no aim in life except to retain a precarious hold on the husband who promised to love and to cherish—with possible mental reservations? I could never go back to that, Max. Never!"

"Give me a chance, Lynn!" he begged. "I'll wait—I'll do anything, if you'll only promise to take me back! I'll be very patient, if in time——"

"Never, Max! I've tasted freedom; I've enjoyed my liberty. I've no one to please now but myself and a public which has been kind. Our marriage was a failure, dear! I've no desire to respond to an encore. Marriage doesn't at all enter into my present plans."

"Then it isn't true—what I've heard?"

"Just what *have* you heard?"

"That you're going to marry that chap you've been working with."

"I certainly am not going to marry any one—yet. I'm fond of Haldane Power in a sane, sensible fashion. Marriage with him would mean an equal partnership, and I think we'd get on pleasantly enough. You see, I haven't many illusions left." She smiled a little. "But I'm not thinking of marriage just now. I want to test my powers, to prove myself. Later, when I've won, if I *do* win, why then"—her smile grew tender—"why, then—perhaps——"



The Big Thing

By Anne O'Hagan

Author of "The Wife of Asa Pincheon," "Dreamers of Dreams," etc.

ILLUSTRATED BY ROBERT A. GRAEF

The second installment of one of the most absorbing serials we have ever published. The story will interest every modern woman with interests outside her home, every husband, and every lover of a strong, real story.

THE STORY OF THE STORY.

Is a career the big thing in the modern woman's life, or is there, after all, a bit of truth in the platitude that "woman's place is in the home?" Anita Holt, indispensable to the cause of child labor, leaves the running of her home to other women. Her husband, Treadway Holt, returning from a Western trip, brings with him his lately bereaved maiden aunt, Miss Sally Treadway, and also Rosamund Fergus, who, on the trip East, has saved Miss Sally's life in a railroad accident. Rosamund, young, very charming, and very capable, is also very destitute, and is primarily interested in getting a job. Quite opportunely, young Jamesy Holt's governess departs. Rosamund accepts the position, and proves a delightful accession to the Holt ménage.

When, as the result of complicity among her own servants, Anita's young son is kidnapped, things seem to have reached a crisis. Anita is, for the nonce, all wife and mother, but when, through Rosamund's keenness, Jamesy is restored to the distracted household, Anita promptly rushes off to her neglected committee work. More and more, Treadway Holt looks to Rosamund for comfort and cheer. She is the moving spirit of his home while his wife is away from it. Returning unexpectedly from a business trip, Anita learns that her husband has been ill. On her way to his room, she sees, through the agency of a wardrobe mirror, a touching scene between him and Rosamund—one which leaves her undeluded as to his affection for the girl.

CHAPTER VII.

THE first time that Treadway Holt had felt a premonitory tingling of the pulse in the presence of Rosamund Fergus had been when they were Christmas shopping together. He had enjoyed her wholeheartedly enough before, enjoyed her softly tinted, delicately modeled beauty, so unlike Anita's sculptured vividness, a beauty that appealed where Anita's commanded, that stole upon the senses impalpably, like faint fragrances wafted from an unseen garden. He had even enjoyed the flavor of something a little mysterious, a little melancholy about her. He did not particularly want to know what it was that gave the touch of wistfulness to her lips, and that sometimes darkened her smiling eyes, but he was pleasurably

aware of it, as he might have been aware of a veil of violet mist intensifying the beauty of the autumn landscape. Moreover, he was, in his warm-hearted way, always conscious of the debt he owed her in behalf of his aunt, and he liked to pay it handsomely, lavishly. But in all this there was no warning.

It had been intended that he and Anita should go shopping together on that particular afternoon. Anita, with a flourish, had marked the date down on the numerous engagement books she maintained—the big silver-and-brocade one at home, the big red-leather one on her legislative-committee desk in the office, the slim little book she carried in her bag. She was to have met Treadway immediately after luncheon—her luncheon that day was a "conference"

"The Big Thing" began in the August issue.

meal—and they were to have visited toyshops in search of the complicated piece of mechanism that Jamesy had demanded in his Christmas stocking, and bookshops for the moment's furor in foreign memoirs for Isabel Holt, and a furrier's for a warm motor coat for aunt Sally, as well as a needlework shop for the particular sort of knitting bag for which she had once been heard to express a longing. And then they were to have had tea together, and perhaps to have stayed irresponsibly in town, with no program at all.

Treadway had been looking forward to the afternoon. His domestic emotions had been newly softened by his son's danger and rescue out of it. He had found something very heart-warming in the presence of his simple, garrulous, little old aunt at his fireside. Anita, whom he always admired, always held affectionately, was more vitally beloved in the flow of feelings freshened at their spring. He was, therefore, the more chilled, the more angered, by her sudden canceling of the program.

She had announced the change at eleven o'clock in the forenoon. An English bigwig in the child-welfare field was in the city for a single afternoon; she was the best person available to confer with him—of course, the internationalization of laws for the protection of childhood; and so on and so on. He had hung up the receiver in a sudden fit of unmannerly petulance before she had finished her excuses. But she had rung him back again to say patiently, forgivingly:

"I'm sorry, Tread, as sorry as can be. And I've arranged for Miss Fergus to meet you, instead. She's looking forward to the big shops. Please don't spoil it for her."

He had snapped back something about being of an age to choose his own companions, but he hadn't spoiled the afternoon for Rosamund. Nor had she spoiled it for him. How radiant she

had been! How frankly she had rejoiced in the chance to spend money without a careful counting of the pennies in her own purse. And how she had loved the toyshop! She had been like a child herself there. She had not been moved to make one single thoughtful, pedagogic utterance on the folly of deadening a child's imagination and constructive ability by the elaboration of his toys. She had tried half the mechanisms in the store, had made the dolls talk, the pigs squeal, the dogs bark, and the *aéroplanes* lift.

He had watched her, laughing and a little inquisitive.

"Were you one of a big brood?" he had asked her. The gayety had been wiped out from her face in an instant.

"No," she answered briefly.

He had been sorry for the idle curiosity which had dampened her pleasure. He ignored her changed looks, but said:

"Do you feel equal to helping me with the most important gift of all—my wife's? I don't know what in the dickens to give her. What do you think she would like?"

"She has everything," Rosamund answered, half sighing. "Everything in the world! But you've got to give her something more, of course."

She put her wits to work, wrinkling her forehead prettily over the problem. Treadway thought how lovely her brow was. He straightened her inebriated-looking little toque.

"There!" he said. "Now you seem more capable of real thought."

She laughed her ready laugh, blushed her ready blush, and raised her own hands to her hat.

"Oh!" she cried, "I forgot my hatpins! That's the matter."

"We'll get you some."

"Does she like jewels?" She was back on Anita's gift. "Of course, you can always give a woman, even if she has everything on earth, jewels."

"Anita doesn't care much for them.

She keeps most of those she owns in the safe deposit. But maybe——"

"Has she a gold mesh bag? Rosamund was illuminated, eager. "I'm sure she can't have one—she'd use it if she had. Oh, I don't see how she could help loving a gold mesh bag."

He wished it were appropriate for him to give *her* a gold mesh bag. It would, so obviously, fill her whole horizon with radiance. He doubted whether Anita would care for it, but perhaps it would be as good as anything.

They had gone together to the glittering palace built for the last and least and most costly of all human needs. Always wonderful with gems and the products of the goldsmith's art, it was more wonderful than ever to-day with its Christmas crowds. Rosamund had been excited, eager, swiftly forgetful of whatever dark recollection his query as to her family had aroused in her.

"Where *do* they get the money?" she had demanded. "How is it possible for so many people to be so Arabian-Nightsy rich? A pearl necklace—did you see that woman? A twenty-thousand-dollar pearl necklace was nothing to her, absolutely *nothing!* And yet she does not look like the Queen of Sheba. Did you ever see such furs? Look at that sapphire bracelet!"

She had paused in front of one of the show cases, her lips parted in almost adoration of the beautiful trinket upon which her eyes were fastened. Treadway had laughed at her, liking her immensely, feeling almost paternal toward her raptures. What a child she was, he said to himself. What fun it would be for the man who set out to satisfy her little girl's appetite for goodies. He liked being so close to her young enthusiasm.

Mr. Holt had not been a man of moderation all these years, to mistrust his emotions now. He was not warned of danger, of any slumberous tiger within him, by his pleasure in her presence,

in her excitement, in her quick appeals to him for sympathy and understanding. Everything had been part of the Christmas, impulsive kindness. And then had come the episode which had, for the moment, startled him.

"I want to buy you a toy," he had told her, after they had bought the gold mesh bag for Anita. "May I not? From both of us, of course, so that you may accept it with perfect propriety. Only, wouldn't it be sensible of you to choose it yourself? I am sure Anita would think so. How about the sapphire bracelet?"

"That *would* be wildly appropriate, wouldn't it!" Rosamund had answered, treating the whole thing as a joke. "Should I wear it when I go down to dancing school with Jamesy, or when I show Delia the flossiest way of cutting lemon peel for tea? No, thank you, sir; it isn't suited to my station in life."

"Well, you've got to choose something. If not the sapphire bracelet—and I dare say that was an unhappy suggestion—then something else. What do you need? Are you simply hankering after silver brushes? Enameled perfume flasks? New cuff buttons for those pretty, manly silk shirts you wear? Why not have something you want, instead of something you don't want?"

Rosamund had sobered down a bit from her first excitement.

"I really don't want anything at all," she had insisted. "It's all a fairy story, my being in your house, being made so welcome and so happy in it. But, after all, you've known me, you and Mrs. Holt, not quite three months. You mustn't give me grand presents."

"If you don't tell me what to give you," Treadway threatened her, smiling down upon her warmly, "I'll buy you a rhinestone tiara. Oh! I have it. I have often heard you running to the library to look at the time, or asking some one for it. You haven't got a watch, have you?"

"Not one that goes," Rosamund admitted.

"A wrist watch, then. I am credibly informed that they don't go for long, but every woman has to have one. Come along and pick one out."

"Oh, no. No, really I can't. It is much too good of you, Mr. Holt!"

"Come along!"

They were in the middle of a crowded aisle. But Rosamund stood obstinately still, shaking her head and compressing her lips into a line of great firmness. She looked like a pretty, recalcitrant child. He caught her hand to pull her forward, and the unbelievable thing had happened. He held it, unobserved in all that throng, for a long second. They looked, faltering, breathless, at each other. Their laughter had departed. Color, merriment, were over. In her wide eyes there was a sudden question. And he knew that his heart was pounding as it had not pounded for—how many years now? Their hands fell apart.

It was over in an instant, that interchange of looks. It was over so quickly that his intelligence denied it had ever been. The quick flow of blood, like ichor through his veins, was passed. He was a man approaching middle life, nearly thirty-five, a man who had forgotten boyish raptures, boyish poignancies, long ago, in the staid comfort of an assured affection. What nonsense, what a wild freak of the imagination to have thought that he had been caught up again for a moment by the old, dizzy enchantment!

"Come along! You must have that wrist watch," he told her matter-of-factly, answering his own clamorous questions, subduing his own tumultuous pulses by the matter-of-factness. She followed him without further protest. When next he met her eyes, across a tray of little timepieces set in black-ribbon bands, she was just a pretty young woman interested in, but not excited

over, a pleasant purchase. No naked soul looked out at him, asking him: "What does it mean? What does it mean?"

The rest of the evening had been determinedly commonplace. They had stayed in town to dinner and had done a show. That had been part of Anita's program for them. But they did not recapture the joyous mood of their early shopping expedition. It had become almost a duty festivity. He felt and acted like a host doing his conscientious best by a visitor. And she displayed the polite gratitude of a guest. By the time they had reached home, each was questioning whether that moment, that look, had been a mere freak of the individual imagination. Treadway was saying to himself: "You old fool, you! Are you growing asinine in your old age? If your ill-regulated male blood stirred unlawfully, is it necessary for you to attribute the same thing to her?"

As for Rosamund, when, after a brief recounting of purchases to Anita, she went to her room, she was perturbed, bewildered. What had that leaping of her pulse, that quickened beating of her heart meant? Or had there really been any such intensification of sensation as she was now imagining? And, even if there had been, why should she ascribe a similar sensation to him? She had been reading too many novels lately. She was a foolish creature. She was a collosally conceited creature to imagine that the man who had known Anita Holt's love could ever succumb to a vagrant emotion for another woman. A nice man, of course, she meant. And Mr. Holt was a nice man, so kind, so boyish, so home loving, so merry! Handsome, too. How his blue eyes had darkened, had deepened, as they had looked into hers back there in the store! Or had they?

"You're a sweet thing, Rosamund," she told herself, addressing her mirrored reflection with contempt. "You, who



He caught her hand to pull her forward, and the unbelievable thing had happened.

used to despise the girls in school who went in for *matinée* idols, and all that. As if you didn't know enough—" She broke off rather impatiently. And then she fell to wondering about Anita. Did she really love her husband? Or did all those interests which crowded her days, all those ardors for great causes which illumined her dark eyes and gave intenser color to her vivid cheeks—did they push him from her heart?

But in the morning, when she saw a busy, preoccupied man scanting his breakfast that he might catch a train, courteous, but brief in his salutations,

she dismissed her romantic surmises. She shook herself sharply back into her duties. And if she sometimes thereafter stole a glance at Treadway to see if there was about him any trace of the being who, she thought, had looked at her in the great store of jewels, she always rebuked herself for sheer folly. He had not looked at her otherwise than any gentleman in a gay mood at any lady!

Always, until the foolish mistletoe episode on Christmas day. After that, after the trembling that had passed through all her body at the light touch of his lips upon her cheek, after her

eyes had seen the unmistakable deepening of his, the paling of his ruddy color for an instant, after that breathless kiss at which the crowd had laughed, she called herself fooled no longer. It was true. Whatever it might mean, he had another look for her, another touch for her, than the casually kind look and touch of their first acquaintance.

That night she had slept not at all until nearly morning. She kept seeing his eyes, the deepening of their color, the incredible miracle of their brightening, as he looked at her in that second—that eternity—before he kissed her. Waves of feeling engulfed her at the recollection. She felt the brush of his lips again her cheek. The soft, smooth flesh burned, smarted with blissful poignancy. It became not memory, but actuality, the kiss. Her mind, her conscience, were in abeyance. Emotion, passion experienced for the first time, possessed her entirely.

Even when, after the fitful, light sleep into which she fell toward morning, she opened her eyes upon the world of facts, the world of codes, she did not at once regain possession of herself. She wanted, with all that part of her controlled by reason, by custom, to keep away from him, not to see him until she was mistress of herself. But a force stronger than reason drove her to the breakfast room. She felt a boundless, dizzying disappointment when Delia said: "You're the only one down, Miss Fergus. Leastwise, Mr. Holt has been and gone, and Jamesy was out as soon as him. But Miss Treadway and Mrs. Holt are having breakfast in bed. You'd ought to be, too—you look pale. Christmas is all very well, but people eat too much. Oh, excuse me, Miss Fergus! I didn't mean you."

"That's all right, Delia," Rosamund answered heavily, forcing a smile. "Even if I didn't eat too much, I dare say I ate injudiciously. Just some tea, please. Nothing else this morning."

That uncontrolled part which had kept her awake all night wanted to break into tears because Treadway was not in the room, was not at his end of the breakfast table, because her eyes could not question his and her whole being swim in seas of bliss at the answer of his. She had never guessed that there comes a time in the life of men and women when merely to be disappointed of the expected glimpse of one person is a supreme blow, knocking the world's foundations from beneath it. Disappointed in the desire she had to look at him, although that desire had been inarticulate, Rosamund felt as though she hung in space, with nothing to support her, nothing to cling to.

By and by will and reason came back to her, ushered in by their familiar handmaid, routine. There were orders to give the cook. It was impossible to focus her thoughts upon turkey croquettes and cream sauce for lunch, without first having pigeonholed recollections of last night. She was conscious that she was pigeonholing them with the intention of gaining freedom as quickly as possible to take them out again.

The business of the day was an interruption, impatiently admitted, to overwhelming emotion. Jamesy, dashing in with bitter comment upon a defective roller skate, was not a charming, likable little boy, but was merely a nuisance, an insistent voice that broke in upon the voice of her heart. Miss Treadway, bustling into the library where Rosamund was rearranging flowers, and beseeching advice upon the patterns for the cuff of the new golf stockings upon which she was about to embark—the others having been yesterday presented to her nephew—was a foolish, tiresome, old lady. Good heavens! How was it possible for a human being presumably gifted with at least a rudimentary mind, to absorb herself in, to

excite herself over, such trivialities? The unbounded selfishness of passion possessed Rosamund and she denied the rights of all others to their interests.

As the day wore toward evening, new expectation arose to take the place of that which Treadway's absence in the morning had disappointed. He would be coming home soon now! She would be able to look at him. She would meet his eyes. She would feel again that flood of happiness that she had felt last night. They were all dining at home that evening. She was glad of that. She could look at him, unnoticed, from time to time, and could renew that joyous ecstasy. How handsome he was! How brown his skin, how blue and kind his eyes! The pride of a woman passionately in love possessed her. The blow had seemed almost unendurable when, on going into the house from an afternoon walk that had seemed on air, Anita had met her with the news that Treadway had telephoned for her to meet him in town; there was an unpremeditated restaurant dinner party forming. Anita, herself, was quite frankly irritated at the prospect.

"Some lumber people from the West," she said disdainfully. "How I hate these business parties!"

Just before she went in town she had been called to the telephone, and after a brief conversation conducted on her part mainly in hospitable ejaculations and monosyllables, she had turned to Rosamund and said:

"I have made amends to you and aunt Sally for going in town. I have told Jack Bowman that we would love to have him to dinner and to spend the evening." She looked mischievously at the girl. But at the change in Rosamund's expression, her merriment departed. "I hope I haven't been indiscreet?" she added.

"I have no doubt Miss Treadway will enjoy him very much," Rosamund had replied shortly.

"But not you? I am sorry!" Anita's manner was full of genuine apology. "I thought you seemed a little down in the mouth at the thought of a lonely evening with only aunt Sally. I will try to get him back." She turned toward the telephone.

"Oh, please don't, Mrs.—Anita!" Rosamund's voice changed. The sweetness and cordiality which were her most characteristic qualities reasserted themselves. "I will be glad to see him, too. Delia accused me this morning of having overeaten yesterday, and, upon my word, I seem to have the temper of a dyspeptic. Mr. Bowman is always amusing."

And then, while she was still the thrall of fevered longings and recollections, with brief alternations of despair and duty and bitter self-reminder, Treadway had gone off on the Western trip which his stepmother had characterized as unnecessary, and therefore a flight, a confession. It was on the day of his expected return that Rosamund, dulled with pain and with self-reproach, had feebly tried to make her escape from his house, only to be overruled by Anita, impatient of any change in her smooth-running machine.

After all, the girl had said to herself, in yielding her purpose she was taking the whole thing too seriously. The relaxed Christmas mood of merriment, of freedom, was past. Mr. Holt had meant nothing—nothing at all! If he had felt any quickening of the pulses, he had forgotten it by this time. She would forget, too. Surely a woman held such a situation in her own control—especially a woman who had the reason for distrusting passionate impulse that she, Rosamund Fergus, had! Why, the very thought of love between men and women had been dreadful to her, and she had vaguely planned a life into which its devastations could never reach; a life whose sweetness was to be in service, whose tenderness was

to be a large, impersonal tenderness toward successive classes of girls, toward the world's waifs and strays. The warmth of her instinctive desire for the comfort and delight of a home did not warn her how vastly apart were her determinations and her talents. The eagerness with which she had snatched at the opportunity for shelter, for companionship and charm, when sheer chance had thrown it in her way, did not warn her how unstable was her resolution to find her happiness in teaching the young and living austerely. The swiftness with which she had yielded to Anita's strong will, the wistful hypocrisy with which she had seized upon the pretext of helping on Anita's work by remaining—these had not warned her.

And so, Anita, coming back from the campaign for children and their homes, was confronted upon her stairway by the sight of her own home threatened with ruin.

CHAPTER VIII.

At the foot of the stairs Anita had met Delia with the electrician's man in tow, come to repair the disabled doorbell. Quite without consciousness of what she said, she answered Delia's surprised greetings, gave some directions about the wiring, and went on toward the library. Miss Treadway had entered it since she had passed there an ceon or two before, long, long ago, in the period when the world was serene, her life orderly, her spirit tranquil. She did not know afterward what she had said to Miss Sally. She recalled what Miss Sally had said to her and she supposed that she must have replied coherently, because her words had evoked no expression of alarm from her aunt.

"Anita! Why, how surprising! How very nice!" Miss Treadway had been full of ejaculation. "Did you telegraph? I am sure you were not ex-

pected until to-morrow. Did any one meet you? It is too bad that you should have had to walk up from the station, although, as you say, it is a very pleasant morning. I don't want to alarm you in the least, Anita, and, indeed, there is no occasion for alarm, for Treadway is much better. His temperature has been normal for a day. He has had a touch of the grippe. I wanted to have you notified, but he forbade it. Both Rosamund and I thought that you would be annoyed at being kept in ignorance of a situation which might grow serious. Grippe is an uncertain thing, and with sister's case always before me, I feel that one can never be too careful. He is sitting up this morning. How glad he will be to see you! I have just left him. He is much better. I came down to find the directions for that pattern for the cuff of the golf stocking—curious they call it a cuff, isn't it?

"Ah, here it is! I knew I had left it here. We have been using his room as a sitting room this morning, I knitting and Rosamund reading aloud to us. What did you say, Anita? 'That day we read no more?' No, I don't suppose we will read any more to-day, since you are home. Although Treadway was enjoying the story, he and Rosamund had read it before, but I should say it was one of those books which would bear rereading—'Sentimental Tommy.' But here I am chattering and keeping you from Treadway. I only wanted to reassure you before you saw him. His temperature has been—why, what do you mean, Anita? Back to town? See us this afternoon?"

She stood, a suddenly indignant little figure in her black-stuff frock with its full-gathered skirt and its tight bodice. Her mild eyes, behind their glasses, actually dared to flash disapproval upon the beautiful niece of whom she customarily stood in awe. Little spots of red came out upon her cheeks.

"You will have to forgive me for saying, Anita," she resumed with heroic resolve, "that I think your interest in your work, important as that may be, has altogether dwarfed your home in your affection. I have just been telling you that your husband is sick. You have been away from him eight days. Before that you had had only one day together after his return from his holiday trip to Chicago. And now you actually propose to leave the house without—" Miss Treadway could not go on. Her temerity had failed her and, besides, there was something so peculiar in a sudden, short laugh of Anita's that it checked her flow of reproving words. After a second she began again, more timidly: "I did not mean to be presumptuous, Anita. Or to assume to judge you in any way. Only—"

"You're quite right, aunt Sally," Anita answered. "I'll not go into the city again until afternoon."

They went out of the library and up the stairs together. Anita talked, talked noisily, as they advanced. She never knew what it was that she said. She kept her eyes sedulously away from that wardrobe mirror which had held so annihilating a picture for her a few minutes before. When they entered the room, Treadway was lying back in his lounge against his pillows; and Rosamund's chair was a decorous distance away from it. Anita was never able to tell whether there was any evidence of guilt in their manner. She had no powers of observation. She had no memory, no feeling, except one all-pervasive hurt. Yet what she said was natural and casual enough.

"Yes, I came back a day early. I called up the office—your office, I mean—and they told me you had been away sick. So I came out at once. Now that I have seen that you are really all right, I have got to go in again. I haven't been to my office."

She looked at them all, but she still had no power of perception. Whether they were flushed or pale, whether they were stunned or voluble, she never knew. She knew only one thing in the world—pain from a blow, pain and the brute instinct to inflict pain in return as soon as she had learned to endure without crying out.

There were questions about the Michigan campaign. Presumably she made the correct answers, for no one interrupted them with questions as to her meaning or her sanity. And by and by Rosamund and aunt Sally were slipping from the room.

"Don't go," said Anita. "That is, unless it's time for—for Treadway"—she had difficulty in saying his name; it was the first time she had uttered it—"to go to sleep, or something of that sort."

"It's almost luncheon time," said Rosamund. "I was going down to tell them to bring your luncheon here with—with—" It was her turn to fumble over a name and title. "Mr. Holt's."

"Don't do that." Anita spoke peremptorily. "I'm not going to stay home for luncheon, after all. I have got to see Mrs. Babcock, and the best time for that is luncheon time. I can get back into town."

"You're not going to stay home to lunch with Mr. Holt?" There were incredulity and disapproval in Rosamund's voice. Color began to mount to her cheeks as it had mounted to aunt Sally's in the library. Indignant judgment shone in her eyes. But Anita, still unperceptive, still occupied solely in the decent bearing of that great pain, noticed nothing. She only reiterated her determination, and in another minute the big, sunny, charming room was empty of her presence. The other two women remained, looking incredulously, angrily almost, at each other.

"What's a mere man, especially if

he's a mere husband, compared to a great cause?" Treadway drawled the question with humorous emphasis.

"I must say, even if it is none of my business," declared Miss Sally with sparrowlike indignation, "that you bear it nobly,—Treadway. Nobly."

Treadway had the grace to look a little ashamed.

"Oh, you mustn't make a plaster saint of me, aunt Sally, because I don't break up the furniture when my wife goes to town and leaves me perfectly well and in perfectly competent hands. You know, if the cases had been reversed, I shouldn't have come out at all. I'd have done my duty by telephoning."

"You," declared Miss Sally incontrovertibly, "are a man."

"The breadwinner," added Rosamund.

"You're both determined to make me out a martyr, aren't you? It's awfully sweet of you, and, of course, I pur with delight under your stroking. But, after all, you're both talking adorable nonsense. The family would not be shy one single loaf, no, not one single bun, if I should do what Anita did and hurry home to satisfy myself just how she was in a similar situation. You're a pair of hypocrites." His pleasant voice caressed them, his kind eyes beamed humorous appreciation of their hypocrisy. "You both pretend to believe in the importance of Anita's work and yet you would both sacrifice it without two thoughts to the preparation of a piece of milk toast for me. She's the



She did not allow her eyes to glance with any particular look or meaning. Her glance traveled casually from Treadway to Rosamund and

only person who takes her work seriously." His voice roughened a little. "That's how she accomplishes things. Accomplishes more than any other woman I know."

Whatever of self-reproach his tribute to Anita denoted, it fell unheeded upon Miss Sally's ears.

"Treadway," she said earnestly, seizing upon the vital core of his remarks, "would you like a piece of milk toast? I used to make it for sister. Would it bother cook, Rosamund, if I should go into the kitchen and prepare some milk toast for my nephew according to my own rule?" She was shining with earnestness and excitement.

"I'm sure she'd love to have you," said Rosamund automatically. She strove to bear her pain—the pain of hearing Treadway's voice roughen with the earnestness of his praise of his wife.

The little old lady pattered from the room and down the stairs. The young man and woman looked at each other. His lips moved and the words they



ing toward any of the three.
thence to Miss Sally.

formed were the "Rosamund, Rosamund," that Anita had divined on the stairway. And there was in them all the yearning that her imagination had supplied.

"Don't," Rosamund begged him. "Don't call me. It isn't right, Oh," passionately, "how can she leave you like this when you need her, when you want her?"

"I'm afraid," said Treadway, striving for his manner of detached humor and failing to achieve it, "that it's you I'm wanting, you I'm needing at this instant. Rosamund, come here to me!"

Her eyes were dark with longing, her cheeks were pale. Her slim, graceful body undulated across the room to him as inevitably as a flower moving on its stalk toward the sun.

Anita had no definite intention, when she left her house, as to where she was going or what she was going to do. Chiefly, she was getting away, out of sight, out of reach. Her spirit was immeasurably wounded, bruised. Not yet

could her mind resume its control of her actions. Pain dictated everything. It dictated flight, disappearance. She had the wounded animal's instinct to hide. But then, too, she had the wounded animal's instinct to fight back. She had been unendurably hurt—she must hurt again unendurably. She would go to his father, whom he loved, to his stepmother whom he liked and admired; she would tell them of what contemptible stuff he was made. For the time being all her anger concentrated itself on him. The girl she for-

got—the mere negligible channel through which falseness had traveled. It was Treadway, not Rosamund, who had owed her, Anita, love and loyalty. It was Treadway who had failed. She would never go back to the house. No, she would never go back to it!

By the time the train came into the station the first blinding, staggering force of the impact with an unbelievable fact was passing. Her trained reason began to assert itself, came to help her bear the situation, to amend it, even. It argued down the silly impulse to flight. Whither would she fly? Where would she hide? What nonsense! Why, this was the sort of thing that was happening every day to women all over the world!

Ah, but not to her, not to her. Not to Anita Holt, wise and reasonable and powerful, who had despised the women who let their lives slip from their own control! It happened to weaklings, it happened to dullards, it happened to women who reared their edifices of life

upon unsubstantialities, upon falsehoods. It could not happen to her, who had builded so wisely, who had married for love, who had accorded love its due part in her life; to her, the intelligent who had not let love dominate her life, swamp her being!

Passing through the station she suddenly realized that she was hungry. She went into the station restaurant and found herself gravely considering the nutritive value of viands. "You must be very sensible, you must not let yourself go to pieces," she told herself. And she ordered with the discrimination of a dietitian. But when the food arrived she could barely taste it. She did not want it. She would never want anything again. Treadway! Treadway and that girl!

She wished there were some one to whom she could talk. Of course, there was no one. She admitted it, realized it. That crazy thought of rushing to his father and testifying against her husband was the thought of a silly girl, of a cheap, cowardly woman who did not know how to manage her life. She, Anita, knew how to manage her life. Why, that was one of the most wonderful things about her! Yet, if only she had a friend! She had a mother. She had sisters and brothers, but there had never been any emotional intimacy between them and her. She saw them all dutifully once or twice a year, in the provincial city where they dwelt. But they had no wisdom with which to light the darkness of her road. She could imagine their trite advice, their narrow reasoning.

Isabel Holt, of course, would give her wordly counsel—wise, but wordly. Isabel might not perhaps be able to restrain a human impulse to crow over her. Ah, no! That was unfair to Isabel. But she couldn't go to her, she couldn't talk to her, she was not willing that the senator should suffer this knowledge of his son. If only Stephen

Watts were back! Stephen, who was so kind that he would comfort her without despising Treadway. But he was not here. He would not be back for another week.

It was curious that her mind should turn to Stephen Watts for help. He was a perfectly impractical person in everything that did not concern his absorbing interests. He had never known how to manage his own life. How could he tell her how to manage hers in such a crisis?

Crisis? What foolish and perfervid words her mind was using! Where was the crisis? Her husband, sick, weak, lonely, had pressed the hand of a pretty girl. What would she, Anita, say to another woman who should make of such a single happening the material for tragedy? Certainly she had not lived all these years more or less in the fashionable world to find anything stupendous in the fact of a man's casual attraction by this woman and that.

Ah, but not Treadway! She and Treadway were different. It was upon that rock that she had builded up her whole existence. Because they were different, she would never be able to forget this slur upon their love. Because they were different, she would never be able to forgive him. What nonsense was she talking? Forgive? What had she to forgive! How many times had she counseled other women to forgive real offenses? But it was because it was she and Treadway, and because they were different, had loved each other differently, had lived their lives differently, that this was unforgivable.

Over and over she said the contradictory things. Round and round her mind ran, a squirrel in the cage. She watched the people at the other tables. At first she did not see them. By and by she began to wonder what problem each one of them carried. At last there entered a woman whose looks were familiar to

her, a sumptuous, voluptuous creature, with a little, dark Russian in tow. The woman saw her, smiled, and bowed. Mechanically Anita returned the salutation, but she did not recognize the speaker. The problem of her identity suddenly and ridiculously loomed important in her confused mind. She gave troubled thought to it. She had it! It was Marion van Alstyne. How could that woman bear to flaunt herself about in her henna-dyed hair and her sables and her dangling pearl earrings, when her home was being broken to bits? Yes, and when the loud voice of that breakage resounded through every place that had known her.

Anita suddenly remembered what she had said to Stephen Watts about the duty laid upon leaders of great causes to subordinate their personal lives to their impersonal. The first dullness of shock and pain was passing from her. She was suffering more, but her pangs were like lightning and cast momentary illuminations along her road. Just now there was mingled with her overwhelming sense of the outrage Treadway had put upon her a fierce disgust that anything could happen to her which could, for even a moment, make her look like Marion van Alstyne. A wave of spiritual nausea swept over her. To be circumstanced for casual observers, like that crude sensation seeker! She, the serious-minded, the genuine, to be placed in a position that the laughing, indifferent world would define as the same position as Marion van Alstyne, who lived for excitement, who paraded for "causes" for the sake of the uniforms and the bands and the pictures in the papers—Marion van Alstyne, who was sporting a little Russian pianist to-day as she sported a Pekingese yesterday!

Well, there was one thing sure, Anita told herself grimly. She would not be in the class with Marion van Alstyne. She would not be one of those women

who allow their cheap personal history to cheapen every interest that they touched. If it was only by giving up her private life that she could keep it from reflecting upon her public life, then she would do it. If they had all been right, if the senator and Isabel had been right in declaring that her absences from home subjected Treadway to greater temptation than he could bear unscathed, then the absences must cease. She was not going to lose her husband! It was not from love of him that she made the resolution, it was from reverence for these ends for which she worked.

Once she had reached a decision, she was able to review her situation more clear-sightedly. Treadway was a slighter man than she had supposed him to be. He could be swayed by the proximity of a pretty woman. Her lip curled. But she put down even the contempt that surged in her heart at thought of her husband's weakness. She did not intend to let emotion, of whatever sort, play its injudicious part in forming her plans. Treadway was a slighter man than she had supposed—granted. But he was her husband, and he was not, she knew it very well, a base man or one to whom dishonor would come readily. He would never be the libertine with whom a woman of Anita's type could not endure to live. And, being what he was, why should she not enter the lists against this girl and win him back to his old allegiance, to his old adoration? She would do it!

But even as she willed it, an irrepressible shudder of distaste, of disgust, shook her. So love, the beautiful, free, ennobling gift, was to become something for which she struggled with another woman! She remembered once when she had been slumming in Paris and in some apache dive had seen two women, hair disheveled, breasts bare beneath torn bodices, fighting for possession of a little, leprous male of

the underworld, who stood by, puffing at a cigarette while they contended. The sight had sickened her physically. She had got out into the air as quickly as possible, and it had taken an hour of driving under the stars along the Bois de Boulogne to restore her. It had taken a week of touring through peaceful countrysides and beautiful, old, dreaming cities, to dim that picture of vile bestiality in her recollection. To-day, resolving to fight against Rosamund Fergus for that thing grown suddenly slight—Treadway's love—she recalled that hideous night in Paris.

But not even that memory shook her resolution. She put down revulsion, she put down weakness. Oh, not because he was necessary to her heart, necessary to any passionate yearning of her nature, did she resolve to keep her husband! She would keep him for honor's sake and dignity. She would keep him that there might be no cackle of spiteful laughter, no hissing of venomous tongues, when her leadership in large causes was mentioned. She would keep him because she did not choose to be a failure! The woman who, married to a man good, "as men go"—Anita found herself using the homely, immemorial phrase—is not able to hold him against competition, is a failure. It had never been part of Anita's plan to fail in anything she undertook.

She looked at the barely tasted viands before her. She was surprised, a little self-contemptuous also, to see that she had eaten almost nothing. She called the waiter. "A large cup of black coffee, please," she said. There was a new ring in her voice, a new light in her eyes. Her finely executive mind envisioned the end to which she was to bend her energies for a time. She began to see, with growing distinctness, the steps by which she must reach it. She must "win Treadway back"—pitiful, despicable necessity! Time was her chief requisite in the conquest.

She thanked the destiny that had given her her high gift of beauty. She would not be compelled, as a less fortunate woman might be, to resort to all sorts of shamefaced devices to render herself physically attractive in her husband's eyes. Not even the charm of Rosamund's untouched youth would count for much in her favor. Anita's features, at once nobly and delicately chiseled, her color, vivid rose and snow, were all of the indestructible variety. She would age slowly, and she would be a magnificent, statuesque old lady, after having remained, for uncounted years, while other women faded, a beautiful young one. Neither would Rosamund's novelty weigh overmuch in the fight. Treadway's instinct was all for the familiar. Ugly things grew dear to him through mere association. He could find endless excuse for shortcomings in his own. His heart put out its facile tendrils around the known, the habitual. That was why his aunt Sally was in the house now—she was a part, spiritually, if not materially, of an old order beloved by him. No, Rosamund's newness would count against her.

So she reasoned, forcefully, hopefully, resolutely, marshaling her forces like a good general, discounting the possibility of failure. She hated the battle to which she was dedicating herself. The need for it offended her to her inmost fiber. But she had no intention of losing it, however much she hated it, however bitterly she regarded the weaknesses, so alien to her own strong nature, that had forced it upon her.

CHAPTER IX.

Treadway had come down to dinner for the first time since his illness. Anita, at home all day, had made a little festival of the occasion. It was marked by lovely wineglasses they had bought in Venice. "Do you remember, Tread?" said Anita, smiling brilliantly at him across the table. It was marked by a

little, flat centerpiece of moss rosebuds. Treadway winced when first his eyes caught sight of it. Then he could not resist looking at Anita and smiling. There had been a little flat centerpiece of moss rosebuds on the table of the tea room in which they had got themselves engaged in Washington. He could not see it and fail to remember the wonderful moment when, behind the back of a discreet waitress in a colonial frock—the tea room was the Abigail Hancock—he had met Anita's hand alongside the muffin dish.

To celebrate the occasion fittingly, Anita had dressed with particular care. She was in maize-yellow, fashioned into the sort of garment of which Rosamund's modest wardrobe could boast not a single sample—a tea gown, intimate and yet magnificent. Rosamund looked at it with hungry eyes from time to time during the dinner, loving it for itself for its long angel sleeves of floating chiffon, for its length of velvet train, for a quite unmistakably Parisian touch of turquoise blue introduced with seeming irrelevance here and there. She paid the tribute of envy also to a twist of silver gauze which Anita had woven into her hair, and which did double duty by accenting both the white feather above her left temple and the silky blackness of all the rest of her head.

Rosamund had been out for a troubled, blissful, tumultuous walk by herself along the river bank, and she had not had time for much dressing when she had come in. Besides, her wardrobe contained no such clothes as these. She was acutely conscious of feet still heavy in walking shoes beneath the table. Anita's slippers of yellow, with their butterfly bows of silver gauze, hurt her unbearably.

But it was not only by her clothes that Anita had begun her campaign. Although there was something which an acute and thoroughgoing observer would have called stark and cold at

the back of her dark eyes, they nevertheless sparkled merrily. Although there was a tense little line outlining the redness of her lips, her smile was constant enough to keep it undetected. She was in a mood of gayety, carefree rejoicing, it seemed. Miss Sally was completely captivated by acquaintance with this new side of her overpowering niece. She voiced her approbation thus:

"Dear me, Anita, I don't think I've ever seen you look so well or seem so happy before. Of course, we are all happy that dear Treadway's illness did not take a serious turn. But there's something more about your good spirits than that accounts for." She paused meditatively.

"She does develop unexpected qualities as a cut-up, doesn't she, aunt Sally?" said Treadway. "A glass of wine with you, Mrs. Holt?" He raised the beautiful, flower-shaped glass to his lips and looked across its rim at the glowing, sparkling creature at the other end of his table. Rosamund took a great gulp of cold water to ease the pain that caught her throat.

"I tell you what it is," aunt Sally went on, enjoying her opportunity for analysis. "It's because you've stayed home three days in succession from that office where you wear yourself out so. No one, I am sure, outdoes me in admiration for all your splendid efforts, Anita, but——"

"Bravo, aunt Sally! We'll make a Fourth of July orator out of you yet, if you keep on using language so eloquently," interrupted Treadway.

"But I must say," pursued Miss Sally, after shaking a reproachful head at her nephew, "that I think your all-absorbing devotion to the cause of women and children will eventually tell upon your health. You have no right to carry it to that extreme, Anita. It is not as if you were alone in the world. You owe it to Treadway and Jamesy,



"You mustn't touch me,"
she said harshly.

to all the large and brilliant circle of your friends——"

"But, my dear aunt Sally," Anita struck in a little impatiently, "don't you realize that what you have all been laughing at for the last half hour has been material gathered while I was away on my last trip? If I had been with you all the time, I shouldn't have garnered these rich experiences to retail to you. I should have been like you and Treadway and—and Rosamund here. What you all need to make you entertaining"—she tempered the impertinence with a smile—"is to go adventuring. Don't you agree with me, all of you? Or have you been having adventures at home?"

She did not allow her eyes to glance with any particular look or meaning toward any of the three. Her glance traveled casually from Treadway to

Rosamund and thence to Miss Sally. But she was acutely conscious that Treadway and Rosamund could not restrain the meeting of their eyes, that the girl's glance was miserable, that her color fluctuated, and that Treadway could not succeed in keeping out of his look the little caress that was one of his charms. His wife fought down a second's impulse to fling out of the room with one short word of scorn for them.

Delia, toward the end of the meal, came in to make the familiar announcement that Mr. Bowman was on the telephone. He had been solicitous in inquiring for Treadway

during the past week, and his friendly rejoicing over his recovery wished to take the form of a visit. Could he come out? Could Treadway see him?

"Jack's a good fellow," grumbled Treadway, rising and going to the telephone, "but his solicitude is a little overdone. I don't want to see him. But I suppose I can't very well say that I'm going out."

"Goose!" Anita's laugh rang merry and wholehearted. "Do you think it's you he really comes to see?"

"I don't flatter myself unduly about it," answered Treadway. "But I know blamed well he'll spoil the evening for me. I was going to ask—to ask—Rosamund"—he brought the name out with an effort—"to sing to us. Jack will want a rubber of bridge."

"Jack likes singing—Rosamund's singing," said Anita, "as well as you do.

We all like it. I have a whole list of old favorites that I'm going to ask her for. You know, Tread—things that we sang in our youth. But perhaps they aren't in modern repertoire."

Rosamund dropped a fork noisily on the floor. She was in that state of mind and of nerves where Anita's reference to her past possession of Treadway were unbearable. It was she who wanted to scream, who wanted to rush away from them all, now.

Jack Bowman made the trip from the city in so short a time as to justify the suspicion that he had telephoned from its northernmost point. He swept into the house bringing with him fresh airs, fresh merriment, a noisy, intrusive, but wholesome sort of breeziness. He had a huge box of candy for Anita, before whose resplendence he professed himself so dazzled as to need smoked glasses. He had a copy of *Life* for aunt Sally; with particular reference to golf stockings, in which some deep-dwelling humorist had found material for mirth. And for Rosamund he had a very rare, exquisite, and entirely inappropriate orchid, a curious thing of spotted, fiery velvet. Rosamund received it with over-impressive gratitude.

The domestic drama in which she had been forced to play the part of onlooker had harassed her nerves, torn at her heart. She could not passively endure it any longer. So she began to play-act herself. She began to flirt a little with the impressionable young man who had already shown such strong attraction toward her. She matched Anita's "You remember, Tread?" with "This is the one you like, isn't it, Mr. Bowman?" She sang his favorite songs, alternating them with the songs for which the others asked. She played partner to him in the inevitable game of auction. And the way she used "we" and "our" made the young man quite palpably dizzy with excitement.

Treadway, watching the comedy, grew

restless, abrupt, depressed. Nevertheless, he could not refuse to obey his wife's suggestion and "give the boy a chance." Anita, rather overdoing the part of a kindly godmother bent upon matchmaking, succeeded in getting both her husband and Miss Sally out of the library for a quarter of an hour. When she came to call the young people into the dining room for an impromptu supper, Rosamund was very pale, and Jack looked flushed and victorious. Anita stiffened to hear that they were engaged. But they made no such announcement, and although the young man's manner was triumphant and gay as he took his leave, it was, nevertheless, too decorous to be regarded as an announcement of his capture of the pretty girl.

Anita went up to her room ahead of the others. All evening she had played the part she had set for herself, and she was weary and disgusted. The pride and resolution which had dictated her goal to her were bitten as by acid by every step of the course toward it. It was almost intolerable that she should have to lie with looks and intonations, with smile and laugh, and the very slippers upon her feet, in order to retain her own; that she should be obliged to descend to what seemed to her the most banal depths of frivolity in order to be free to accomplish the big thing upon which her heart was set.

She went into the nursery and stood for a few minutes looking down at Jamesy, round, rosy, and adorable as he slept. How could Treadway, how *could* he, who had a son like that, descend to baseness? For lightness was baseness. How the child adored his father! And his mother, also. Anita's throat throbbed with the swelling of pride at the thought. More than those mothers who are always at home, and upon whom falls the daily necessity for discipline, she shared with her husband her little boy's enthusiastic love. It was a "party" to Jamesy when mother was

at home. He was a friendly little soul—Anita wished jealously that his heart had not responded so immediately and so entirely to Rosamund's charm. But, much as he liked her, gladly as he accepted her ministrations and her caresses, she had not replaced Anita in his heart. Anita knew it, rejoiced in the knowledge. And she resolved, as she stooped to kiss him very lightly on the exquisite curve of his cheek, with its sweep of upcurled lashes, that Rosamund never should win him away from her. Her son shared with her work in being a reason for winning in this ignoble strife to which she had committed herself.

Some day, perhaps Treadway, himself, would be a reason. To-night he was not. Anita, conscious of the integrity of her own heart and her own purposes, felt no indulgence for one claiming to stand on an equality with her, and failing in uprightness.

CHAPTER X.

They were down at the clubhouse the next afternoon, the three of them. They had been for a brisk walk along the snow-packed river road. They were having tea in front of the big, leaping fire in the lounge. There were not many people about. The links were unplayable and the customary crowd of golfers was absent. Exercise had made both the women glowing and brilliant. Anita looked across from her chair behind the tea things toward Rosamund, remembering what Isabel Holt had said about the fetching effect of the girl's sport clothes. She was too intelligent a woman not to admit the full truth of Isabel's saying. Wood nymph, hamadryad, that was what she was, in her soft, brownish-green clothes, with her lovely, colorful face and wonderful cloud of soft-spun, pale hair beneath her cap. There was something elusive about her, too, like a sprite. There was a touch of melancholy always about her beauty that

gave it the quality of mystery which is to beauty what an October mist is to a blazing landscape. No wonder Treadway found her alluring! Anita tried to see her with the just eyes of perfect detachment.

The waiter approached her.

"Beg pardon, ma'am," he said, "but your house has switched a message from the city on to the wire in the office. Do you wish to answer it? Shall I say you're here?"

"Oh, bother! Well, I will come."

"I thought you said you had turned over your work in town to some one else—to that Mrs. Benson, wasn't it?" said Treadway.

"Yes. But, quite possibly this is not from my office."

"Oh, yes, it is! No one else would be so persistent in getting you."

But when she had vanished through the door toward the office, he turned to Rosamund with a new expression, with a look of tension.

"Rosamund," he began abruptly, "how could you torment me so last night?"

"I don't know what you mean," Rosamund answered, taking refuge in the universal falsehood.

"Yes, you do." His voice was rough, his face looked almost haggard as his eyes devoured her young beauty. "You know that you deliberately encouraged that nuisance, Jack Bowman."

"You mustn't call him a nuisance. Not to me." Rosamund's voice trembled as she interrupted him. "He—he—I—"

"Yes, yes!" Treadway seemed to try to jerk the conclusion of her broken sentence from her. "He—he—you—what is it you are going to do with your collection of pronouns?" He tried to bring himself back to the gayety of his normal manner.

All the rosy color that walking had brought into her fair face seemed to drain out of it as she looked at Tread-

way. All the brightness went out of her eyes. It was a pale and tragic girl who finally answered him.

"He wants me to marry him. I—I am going to do it."

He stared at her without any change of expression for a full minute. She essayed to look back as firmly. But by and by her lips began to quiver and her eyes filled with tears.

"You see," he said hoarsely. "You see. You are not going to marry him. You cannot even speak of it without breaking your heart as well as mine. If you have told him any such nonsensical thing, you must untell it. Do you hear me, Rosamund? Why—why—we love each other. You have told me so!"

She shook the tears from her eyes.

"I had no right to tell you anything of the sort," she said. "And you—you had even less right to say such a thing to me. You—why, you—why, you are in love with your wife!" The pent-up jealousy of the three days just past broke in her voice. Treadway winced. He put out his hand as though to stop her.

"We mustn't talk about that here and now," he said. "She—she is the most wonderful of women. My intelligence tells me that. But if she were one of the heavenly host—oh, my dear, my heart has told me that she is not its mate! But we mustn't talk about her now. Why were you so foolish as to promise Jack—or were you merely tormenting me? Did you really promise to marry him?"

"I really promised it," Rosamund answered. But there was a faltering in her voice now.

"You know now that you could never go through with it?"

"What else can I do? Certainly I cannot go through with this. To live in the same house with you—and with her. To hear her call me by my name with no suspicion in her voice, to meet

her eyes—her eyes are so honest. They've never had to lower before any one's look. I can't stand it. I shan't try to stand it. Maybe I shan't marry him, after all—I don't believe I could do that, either. But——"

"Of course you couldn't! You are not that sort of a girl."

"I don't know what sort of a girl I am," replied Rosamund stormily. "I never thought I was the sort of girl to go into any woman's house and let her husband—let her husband——"

"Sh! Here she comes."

Anita returned. There was no look of curiosity in the easy glance she gave them.

"You were right, Tread," she announced. "It was the office. I'm afraid I'll have to go in for an hour or so tomorrow. Are you going back to the office? We might go in town together, if you are."

"I'll see how I feel in the morning," Treadway temporized. He fetched a little cough. Anita veiled her scornful eyes with her discreet lids.

The next morning, of course, he decided that another day away from the office would benefit him. "It will put me on my feet," he told his wife. And, indeed, there was a worn and harassed look about his face that gave some semblance of reason to his excuse.

"You do look a bit seedy, that's a fact," she said. "But you have at least three female slaves to minister to you, and I think you can spare me."

"Three? What do you mean?"

"Aunt Sally and Delia and cook," Anita, replied. "Or ought I to have made it four?"

"Three is enough, for a man who doesn't need any. Take care of yourself in the wicked city and come back as soon as you can."

He moved toward her as if to bestow the conjugal kiss prescribed by habit. But Anita was stooping to pick up something from the floor, and to his

boundless relief evaded it. He did not guess that every muscle in her body was taut at the very thought. He was so anxious to escape to Rosamund and resume the interrupted conversation of the afternoon before that he did not take time to think how remote had been their contacts, his and Anita's, in the past few days. Had he set to work to analyze the situation, he would have realized that he had been instinctively avoiding the habitual caress, the customary give and take of touch, with her. He had the repulsion of the decent man, freshly in love, toward duplication of kisses, promiscuity of embraces. But, had he stopped to reason, it must have occurred to him as strange, as menacing, that his abstentions from the comfortable, routine interchange of little, daily marks of affection had been made so easy. He would have been alarmed, had he not been so much absorbed by the problem of his new passion, at the way in which Anita met his coldness.

The day was clear, and he and Rosamund went for a walk in the pale winter sunshine, evading the benevolent, unsuspecting eyes of aunt Sally. In the bare grove on the hilltop they sat down together. There were a few fallen logs here, and a nest of stones in which outdoor meals were cooked when Jamesy's passion for picnics drove his family from the shelter of their roof. Rosamund looked years older than her age. She was white and there were lines of pain and resolution about her lips and eyes.

"You mustn't touch me," she said harshly, as he essayed to draw her close to him on the big log where they sat.

"Ah, but I want to!"

"It doesn't matter what you want or what I want," was her answer, stormy and yet fatalistic. "We must take what They"—her eyes looked upward through the bare trees as if she saw quite clearly the rulers of her destiny—"what They give us. They've given you

a wonderful wife, beautiful and good and—and—gifted. And a little boy—such a darling little boy! I'd give my life if he were mine!"

"Oh, Rosamund, don't, don't! You are hurting me!"

"I want to hurt you!" she cried. "I want to hurt every one, but most of all you and myself. I don't know why. It seems to me that if I could drive hot, sharp knives into my flesh, I would somehow be happier! And it hurts me like sharp knives to hurt you!" Her eyes filled with tears as she turned brokenly, tenderly, toward him.

"Dearest, dearest!" he whispered, seizing one of her cold little hands and kissing it.

"You mustn't. I've said you mustn't. I mean it. I'm not going to stay in her house—your wife's house—and have her husband make love to me! I'm not—oh, dear God, I am *not* that sort of woman!" She raised her stricken eyes again to the sky as she intensely asked Heaven to hear her.

"You are all that is good and pure and true," he said earnestly. "All the fault is mine. You are not to blame for being so lovely that I could not help adoring you—and for being so kind that you could not help— What nonsense I am talking! Neither of us is to blame. We fell in love. We did not try to fall in love. It was decreed. From the day I looked down into your lovely eyes when you lay in the hospital, after you had saved my old aunt—from that day I must have known, though I wouldn't believe, wouldn't let myself know."

"I'm going away from your house," she interrupted almost roughly.

"I don't see how I can bear it," he said. "But, of course, you are right. You must go away!"

"And I shall never see you again."

"What nonsense you talk, and what wicked little lies you tell!" Treadway's voice was imperious, though it was ten-



Walters stood outside. "Beg pardon, ma'am, but has there been any message from Mr. Holt? He wasn't on the train."

der, and he tried to cloak both imperiousness and tenderness with humor. "Of course, you are going to see me again. You are not going to take from me the most wonderful thing that life has given me, and disappear with it like a thief in the night."

She looked at him with wide eyes that swam in tears. Her lip quivered. She shook her head and a tear brimmed over her lashes and fell. He bent toward

her and kissed it from her cheek. She jumped to her feet, all a slender flame of protest and of fright.

"You had no right," she panted, "no right to do such a thing! I told you that you must not touch me. I meant it. You do not respect me——" Sobs choked her utterance.

"Where have you learned that stuff? Because cheap men do not respect the cheap women whom they kiss, how dare

you say that I do not respect you when I kiss you? You who are the purest, the most precious of all the women in the world! Don't poll-parrot sayings that you learned from some poor, anaemic schoolmistress who never felt a great purifying wave of love in her life, and who laid down rules of conduct based on petty spite for what she had missed."

"Whether you respect me or not, or whether I am right or wrong, doesn't matter. You must not, you *must* not touch me!" Rosamund, with instinctive wisdom, avoided debate and held to the one assured thing in her knowledge.

"I will do whatever you tell me. I will obey you utterly." Some pitying perception of how the struggle between her conventions and her love was rending her made him kind and docile in her hands. "But come and sit down again. I promise you I shall not touch you."

She came and sat beside him again. And for the billionth time, a man and a woman, caught in the net of circumstance and passion, debated their lot with the touching conviction that theirs was a unique problem and that some unique interpretation of all the codes must be made to meet it. For the billionth time a man and a woman, burning with the new love that makes the whole world new, cheated themselves with the immemorial delusion that with them passion was a more ethereal thing than with the rest of their kind, and that they might safely commune as friends, as comrades of the spirit, putting down all insubordinations of the flesh.

Were they not civilized human beings, Treadway wanted to know, somewhat oratorically. Was it merely her beauty, merely her softness and grace that he loved in Rosamund? The thought, he said, was sacrilege. Was not that desire which had troubled him, which had made him reach out tender

hands toward her, the most ephemeral, trivial part of his love? They could be friends, such friends as the world had seldom seen! They could read and walk together. They could watch the sunset, watch the sea. They could feel at the same moment the overwhelming mystery and beauty of nature. They could give each other a thousand exquisite happinesses which meant no disloyalty to any one. For the billionth time a man and a woman talked as if the sole demand of married faith was the inviolability of the body.

Of course, Rosamund was to write at once to Jack Bowman and to tell him that she had been mad, carried away by a moment's impulse, when she had promised to marry him. Although for Treadway the problem of his marriage and his new love was solved by high-sounding resolutions, there was, of course, no need that Rosamund should create such a problem in her own case. She was at once to leave Anita's employ. Austerely delicate as their relation was to be, hers and Treadway's, they both admitted the unfeasibility of maintaining it there in Anita's house. Rosamund was to find a teaching job—she was very insistent about that. Not even Treadway's "Oh, my darling, it breaks my heart to think of you working and skimping when I have all this stupid money, and want so much to take care of you," shook her resolution. They agreed that some sort of a job could be arranged even in midseason.

Treadway talked inevitably the language that has become the language of the sad. It is the misfortune of clandestine love that, though it speak with the tongue of men and of angels, the beauty of its words has been forever tarnished by base usage. Lancelot himself could not woo Guinevere with speech that would not cause the worldling to stick his tongue into his cheek. But to the two of them, sitting upon the fallen tree and building their un-

substantial house of dreams, every syllable was bright, new-minted gold.

Until, at the end, they rose to go. They stood for a minute looking into each other's eyes, eyes bright and sad and loving. And then, because neither of them was the stuff of which heroes and martyrs are made, all their fine promises were forgotten, and their pledged abstinence was mocked. He held out his arms, and with a little cry she came into them and hid her face against his shoulder. Great waves of feeling shook him as he felt her trembling there within his arms. He heard her sob, and tears sprang to his own eyes. Forgotten, now, all the resolutions of a moment ago. Forgotten, now, Anita and the affection and admiration he had declared for her not five minutes since. Forgotten duty, the love he bore his boy, everything but the girl sobbing in his arms. They knew now that the self-denying love, the blameless communion of which they had prated, was the very sheerest stuff that ever went into the fashioning of a dream.

CHAPTER XI.

Treadway had had it out with himself. He was not going to adopt, at his age, the uncongenial rôle of a *roué*. Since the test had proved that he was not one of the fortunate men for whom a Platonic relation with a beloved woman was possible, he must let Rosamund's wisdom be his. He must let her go away where he could not follow.

He reviewed his situation. He had, in reason, no quarrel with Anita. She was the woman he had loved with young ardency, when he had dreamed a roseate dream. It had not come true. He believed in his heart, though he could not convincingly formulate his belief, that the fault was hers. He told himself that he had always been ready to make their love the chief thing in their lives. He had never been the slave of business

that many men become. He had, in his younger manhood, established his taste for clean sport, for reading, if not for study, for intelligent enjoyment of music, for decent games. All this side of life he had been prepared to share with his wife. Who but an unloving woman would have declared it all not enough, would have called it flummery, meringue, and what not, as Anita had rudely called it? She had insisted upon occupying her too abundant leisure and upon exercising her too energetic mind in pursuits which she regarded as more "real." It was those pursuits of hers, and not his business, he told himself, which had alienated them, which had created the emptiness into which love of Rosamund had come flooding.

But whosoever the fault, there was no question about the outcome. He was going to be faithful to Anita, who had deserved faith, even if she hadn't made his life what he had expected it to be. He was going to be faithful to Anita, who, doubtless, loved him as well as the hard limitations of her nature permitted. He admired her, he respected her, and, when her interests did not conflict with his pleasures, he was proud of the part she played in large affairs. He couldn't bear to hurt Anita, and he couldn't bear to meet a look of contempt in her clear, brilliant eyes. He was by no means so lost in love for Rosamund, he told himself, that he was going to ask his wife to make way for her. No, he would leave that sort of thing to captains of industry who had achieved success through greater brutality than he could boast, and to conscienceless voluptuaries who made their shifting desires the rule of their universe.

As for a clandestine relation with Rosamund, that was out of the question. He respected her, even as he had told her. It would be beyond words dastardly to take advantage of her love for him, that had sprung up beneath his own

roof, to do her injury. It was all very well, for the purposes of sprightly conversation, to reason like a social philosopher about marriage and to hold it negligible, an institution which had almost served its time. "Almost" was not enough. The world was still living under a very ancient rule, and Rosamund was not the sort of woman to pioneer in strange places.

All of these considerations had weighed heavily with him. He knew that he was going to suffer grievously when she left the house, but he told himself that his resolution was formed. She must go away; she must go where he could not follow her until time had cooled the fever in his veins. It would be safer so. He had insisted, in their talk upon the subject, that he be allowed to finance her going away. She had saved very little during the brief term of her employment. It had gone hard with her pride to agree, but she had finally yielded to what seemed to be inevitable and wise.

It was the day after they had discovered themselves no stalwart saints in their love, able to transmute all the longings of their weak flesh into beautiful flowers of the spirit, that Rosamund, for the second time, "gave Anita notice."

"Are you quite sure you want to leave me?" Anita flung the question abruptly at the girl. She did not look at her, but out through the window of the little sitting room off her bedroom, that was so much more like an office than a boudoir.

"Quite sure," said Rosamund nervously.

"What are you going to do?" Anita was impatient with her own inability to accept the girl's resignation without question. She knew, of course, what forces were driving her away. Why should she trouble herself further? Rosamund had lived, had had shelter, food, and clothing before she ever saw

the Holts. She probably could make out to live after she had ceased to see them. But, although the woman irritably communed thus with herself, she could not let the girl go quite so easily.

"I think there is an opening for me in Philadelphia," faltered Rosamund. "One of the girls in college with me wrote me about it. I might be able to get the position now—she thinks that I will be able to get it. Later it would be filled." Her voice trailed off vaguely.

"Well, we mustn't stand in your way again," said Anita briskly. "I couldn't very well let you just go out into space after you had been such a godsend to me, but if you really have a good opening—" She tried with all her force to put out of her mind the recollection of Rosamund's face turned toward her husband as she had seen it in the mirror. She even tried not to look with too discerning an eye at the pale, grief-marked countenance before her in the flesh. She tried, with that justice which was characteristic of her, not to remember what she owed the girl. She was not quite generous enough to try to forget what the girl owed her, but at least she would not let the thought of that great debt stand between them.

"We shall never forget, either Treadway or myself, the part you played in finding our little boy for us."

"I'm glad," said Rosamund with quivering lips, "that I have done anything at all that makes you grateful to me. I—I—I am very glad." A big tear splashed down upon her folded hands.

"You mustn't cry," said Anita briskly. "I have an almost masculine hatred of tears. But, instead of making me want to remove them by kindness, they make me want to give the weeper something to cry for. Now you have nothing to cry for at all. You've done us a great service, and you've made us"—she gulped at the falsehood—"your permanent friends. It is sweet of you

to care so much about us, but this is what life is—meetings and partings; making associations and breaking them. You've got to develop a less sensitive epidermis, my dear Rosamund."

Rosamund dried her eyes.

"I think perhaps one has to be born with one," she said a little stiffly.

"A curious thing has happened," said Anita, taking up a letter on her desk. "It makes things turn out almost uncannily well for me. Miss Winthrop that was, Mrs. Kelley that is—my old factotum, wishes to come back. It seems that her James wishes to go to a technical school and she, like the excellent, ambitious wife that she is, intends to make it easy for him. It's a wonderful coincidence for me!"

Rosamund's face brightened.

"Then it won't inconvenience you if I got at once?" she asked eagerly.

"I shouldn't let my convenience interfere with yours in any case," answered Anita. "But, of course, this removes every vestige of inconvenience. Mrs. Kelley can come, she writes, any time after the eighteenth."

"To-day is the fifteenth, isn't it?"

"Yes. Do you want to go before the eighteenth? Now that I am staying at home so much, of course I can manage——" She broke off and looked inquiringly at Rosamund. "But you must certainly be here for dinner to-morrow night. You've grown to be such a favorite with my father and mother-in-law, to say nothing of the other people——" Again she broke off.

"I'll be glad to stay until the eighteenth," said Rosamund.

She went out of the room after a few more desultory remarks. She was eager to be gone, eager to enter upon her martyrdom. By and by, perhaps when she was older, when age had subdued the poignancy of her feelings, she and Treadway might safely meet again, might trust themselves to that self-denying friendship of which they had

talked. By and by, when she was quite old—thirty, thirty-five, or so—surely by that time, thwarted human yearning would be quite dead! It was only, she supposed, the love that did not have to be smothered, buried, that lived on, eager and glowing, to such antiquity of age as that!

She told Treadway what had been decided. He grew white, his very lips losing their color. When he looked at her, he realized how sharp would be the pang of her disappearance from his life.

"I wonder if, after all, I can bear it," he said. "To go through life never seeing you—never seeing your lovely, sad, little face; never hearing your dear voice—oh, Rosamund, it can't be right!"

"It is right. That is why we're doing it. And it will not be for all our lives!" Hope thrilled her voice. "By and by we shall have learned to see each other without wrong. By and by—soon—I shall be able to look at you without having my hands want to rest upon your shoulders." Her hands made an involuntary gesture toward him and he caught them, and held them against his heart for a minute.

"You feel how it is beating?" he said.

They looked at each other with infinite, speechless, blissful despair.

"There is one thing we are going to have," he told her resolutely. "We are going to have one day together to live on—one day that we can put away in our hearts as a promise of days by and by, when we are old, when we have learned how to make our hands and eyes and lips obey us. You're going with me to-morrow, down to that place I told you of on Long Island, the place where the bay almost meets the sea, the place that I have always loved ever since I was a boy. We are going to see the sand dunes and the sea together, once, before we separate."

She made some half-hearted objec-



"Don't ever marry a public woman, Watts," said Treadway. "She'll put you and your house and your affairs where they belong—among the unconsidered trifles."

tion, spoke of her duties, only to have him brush aside the suggestion and show her how a necessary day's shopping would cover her absence. As for the dinner in the evening, she would be back in plenty of season for that.

"Haven't we the right to it, the right to just one day?" he demanded. It seemed to Rosamund, looking at him with adoring eyes, that they were very moderate in the demand of their rights. One little day, out of long, long years full of days when they would not see each other! Why, Anita herself, if she knew how they loved each other, and how nobly they were behaving, would grant them a day!

CHAPTER XII.

"He'll be out on the next train, certainly," said Anita to Treadway's father. "It isn't like him to be so late. But he knew that dinner isn't till eight, and it's only a quarter past seven. You will have to put up with me until he comes."

"It's dreadful of us to have come so early," said Isabel Holt. "No one but a marvel like you would be dressed yet. Think of being ready three-quarters of an hour too soon! It's no wonder they call you the best executive in the whole association. But the senator wanted to have a few words with Treadway before dinner about that Michigan busi-

ness. He can have them after dinner just as well. Who else is coming beside the Elwells?"

Anita ran over the list of her dinner guests.

"Doctor Loman is substituting for Jack Bowman," she said. "Jack had accepted two weeks ago, but I think something must have happened to his young romance. He called up this morning and said that he is about to depart for Tennessee or somewhere. His voice sounded a little queer, and Tennessee a little uncertain!"

"Who's going to sit next to me?" Mrs. Holt was studying the dintier diagram on Anita's desk. "Good! I like them both. And Doctor Loman's a nice boy for Rosamund to play with."

"I hope she gets in in time to dress," said Anita.

"Isn't she home?"

"No, she had some shopping to do and went in town early this morning."

"Leaving all this big dinner on your hands?" Isabel's voice expressed disapproval as well as astonishment.

"Oh, she had everything well in hand yesterday. She's leaving me to-morrow. Miss Winthrop is coming back. Rosamund had some shopping to do." Even to herself Anita's voice sounded flat and unconvincing.

"Have you called the office to see what's keeping Tread? The cars are coming by from the seven-twenty-two. There isn't another train until the seven-forty-eight. He won't have time to dress. Perhaps he's come on this, though, and is walking up."

"No, I told Walters to meet all the trains until they both came."

"Well, let us hope they had a blow-out at the foot of the hill and have stopped to change tires. That would be better than having to scramble into their clothes in two minutes, as they will have to from the seven-forty-eight!" Isabel's voice scarcely held the

hope she expressed. And at that moment a rap at the door dissipated the expectation entirely. Walters stood outside.

"Beg pardon, ma'am, but has there been any message from Mr. Holt? He wasn't on the train."

"Did Miss Fergus come out?" Anita tried to make it casual.

"No. Neither of them."

The conjunction of words seemed ominous to both the women listening. Isabel Holt's face was grave. Anita recovered her self-possession first.

"How exactly like a man!" she exclaimed, giving the effect of humorous observations to her meaningless remark by the vivacity with which she spoke.

"Yes, isn't it?" Isabel seized upon the opening and laughed also. Then, after Walters had gone away, prepared to meet the next train, she added: "H hadn't you better call up the office? He may have left a message. You know how stupid telephone girls are!"

"I know that Miss Hogan is the most careful, accurate, and competent person in the whole world," Anita answered vigorously. "So do you know it. There never was another such operator. If she didn't deliver a message to me, it was because he left nothing with her to be delivered."

"Anita, don't look like that. Don't get any silly notion in your head."

"Dear Isabel, who first tried to put 'silly notions' in my head? I thought you were very foolish at the time. I—I don't think so any more. I regard it as very peculiar, sinister even, that they should both be away like this—together."

"You've gone mad, my child." Mrs. Holt tried to achieve the effect of airiness and failed signally.

"No, I don't think that I'm the one who has gone mad. But we can't stand here surmising all the evening. It won't be necessary to make any mention of Rosamund's absence. None of the other

guests would know whether or not she had been invited. If Jack Bowman were coming, I should have to make some explanation to him—poor, lovesick dolt! But, thank Heaven, he isn't! I am going down now to change the place cards. Tell the senator—tell him whatever you think wise. Only don't let him look worried."

She darted off, leaving Isabel to stare after her with an expression of fondness, perturbation, and pride. Then she turned her thoughts to the absentees.

"No matter how far things have gone with them," she said to herself, "they couldn't have been so perfectly idiotic as to choose to-day for eloping. Though, when people are idiotic enough to elope, they probably don't think very much of the day's engagements. What is a dinner that evening compared to the breaking off of their whole lives' appointments?"

Walters came back from the last before-dinner train without either of the awaited passengers. Anita absolved him from further attendance at the station. She made feasible explanation of Treadway's absence, installed his father in his place at the head of the table, injected an animation into the company which only the most fortunate of dinner parties usually achieves, and was carrying things off with a high, courageous hand, when she received a message from her husband.

"Beg pardon, ma'am," said the servant at her elbow in a low voice, "but Mr. Holt has just telephoned that he was held up by an accident to the train ahead of his, coming over from Philadelphia. He wasn't able to get to a telephone for several hours. He is all right and will be home later."

Anita thanked the man, but made no mention of the message to her guests.

"Railroad wrecks seem to play an important part in their affairs!" she thought contemptuously. She felt that she despised her husband so completely

that she could never go on with the ignoble task of "trying to win him back." Of course, the events of the day, as she interpreted them, seemed to prove that she had already failed in that endeavor. But, if success had been already visible, had had a foot upon her very threshold, she felt that she could not go on with the effort. There was the bitter taste of failure upon her palate, the sharp, hot sting of defeat, but she interpreted it all as the distaste of pride and self-respect for an unworthy task.

The guests departed early, all except Treadway's father and stepmother. They lingered with the apparent intention of sustaining Anita through the trial of further waiting, and the severer trial of meeting her husband. But Anita got rid of them.

"I know you want to talk to Treadway about that Michigan business, senator," she said with her fixed smile. "But I'm not going to let you do it to-night. We mustn't forget that Tread has been ill. He'll be tired to death after being held up in this way. I'll keep him at home to-morrow morning so that you may have a talk with him here, if you aren't going in to town."

"Oh, that business isn't so very important. It can wait. But I wanted to see Treadway. I have something else to say to him." The senator spoke gruffly. "He ought to be told what bad manners it is for a host to neglect a company at his own house."

"He's not to blame for holdups on the Pennsylvania Railroad, you know," said Anita, still smiling.

"Oh, the Pennsylvania Railroad!" The senator's manner quite deliberately gave the lie to his son's explanation of his absence and removed the honorable transportation company from the conversation. But it was impossible for him and Isabel to stay, in the face of Anita's resolute air of pleasantly speeding the parting guest.

She went out into the broad hall with them herself, and to the door. Their last glimpse of her was of a radiant figure, set in soft, brilliant lights—a very genius of home. When their motor door slammed upon them, she went slowly back into the house, the mockery of smiles fading swiftly from her face. She switched out lights here and there, and in the semigloom went slowly up the stairs toward her own rooms. Delia met her on the landing.

"Mrs. Holt," the girl began a little nervously, "I have a message for you from—from Miss Fergus. She came in by the side door just as you and the company were finishing dinner. She wanted me to tell you, when I had a chance, that she was in and that the reason she did not come home in time, and did not telephone, was because she was sick. She must have eaten something for lunch, she said, that disagreed with her—or—or something. She's all right now, she says. She's gone to bed. She wanted me to tell you."

"That is too bad. I am sorry that she is ill. I'd be much obliged, Delia, if you would see if she needs anything. Perhaps you might drop in upon her again later on and let me know how she is. I'm a little tired. I won't go to her myself unless you find it necessary."

"Oh, no!" Delia's manner was vigorous. "She looked all right, quite all right when she came in. She might have been a little pale."

Anita went on to her own room. She took off her gown of shimmering satin, the slippers that matched it, the ornaments that harmonized with it. Dully, almost like a sleepwalker, she disposed of them. Delia, who had laid out her night things, had put a severe-looking robe, almost like the garb of some stern sisterhood, out for her—a straight-hanging thing of white wool. Anita, unseeing, slipped her arms into the wide sleeves and mechanically sat down at

her dressing table to brush her black hair. She did not see her own reflection in the mirror—the pale, set face, the scornful mouth, the somber eyes. She was looking through the glass into a revolting present, full of lies, full of compromises, and into a future stark and unlovely—a future in which she would take her place in that long procession of women who have accepted deceit and lovelessness as the portion of their married lot.

She heard Treadway when he came in. Her figure stiffened; the mirror gave back sparks of fire to her eyes. She would *not* accept deceit! Lovelessness she might have to accept. She thanked her destiny that she was not a weak woman, finding the whole of life in soft emotions, timid to face the truth when truth wore harsh features. She could live without love! But truth was another matter. She could not live without that. She could not tolerate deceit; she would not! She had intended to accept his excuses as if she believed them, to continue the acted falsehood with which she had received the message from Rosamund. But now she knew that she was going to do nothing of the sort. Lying, by word or look or deed, was too ignoble for her, she told herself. She was through with it.

He came into the room and she saw him first in the mirror. Her heart, that was stone against him, played traitor for a second, and seemed literally to turn in her bosom. Her wrists that a moment before had seemed of steel as she plied her silver brushes, were suddenly like water. But the second of weakness passed almost before she was aware of it. Only her intelligence took note of the qualities that had, though briefly, shaken her heart—the grace of his emotions, the charm of his smile, the compulsion that mysteriously dwelt in the very color of his eyes.

He crossed the room and kissed her

lightly on the top of the head. He began his excuses and explanations easily, too easily! Where, in what school, she wondered, had he learned that facility of falsehood?

"Railroad travel doesn't seem to be the thing for me," he said. "Two accidents in less than four months is crowding events. The one to-day wasn't to our—to my train. But there was a wreck ahead of us on the road and it took them hours to clear it away. We were out in the wilds, more or less, and I couldn't get to a telephone. Did you have a good dinner party, 'Nita?'"

"You were missed, of course," answered Anita, looking steadily at him in the mirror. "Your father and Isabel were particularly sorry not to see you. Rosamund's absence naturally did not make so much difference."

"Rosamund's absence?" He tried to express mild surprise.

"Yes." She left it for him to go on.

"Why, what happened to her?" He had turned his back and was moving toward the fireplace. She whirled around upon her chair. Contemptuously she watched him for a second as he did something with the tongs.

"Why, a railroad wreck, wasn't it?" Her voice was calm. But the tongs fell noisily from his hands.

"What do you mean?"

"I mean," said Anita very softly, very smoothly, "that you know perfectly well you and she were together to-day, and that you are both only wasting time and—and inventive energy—when you try to make up stories to pretend that you were not."

For a second he looked at her as though stunned. He had grown red under her attack. But after a moment or two the color faded from his face, and by main strength, as it were, he forced an amused expression there.

"You don't mean to say that, after all these years, my self-sufficient wife is actually paying me the compliment of

jealousy?" he said. He threw back his head and laughed. "Anita, this is too rich!"

"Don't bother with amateur theatricals for me," said Anita shortly. "You aren't a very good actor, Tread. It's all wasted effort. I know—not everything, I dare say—but quite enough to make it useless for you to try to deceive me."

"You've been listening to some silly gossip around this scandal-monging suburb, because I have been seen taking an occasional walk with Miss Fergus," he declared, dropping his insufficient mask of badinage and speaking with an air of virtuous indignation. "That's not like you, Anita."

"No one has ever spoken to me about you and her. You are quite well aware that I should never allow any one to. I'm too busy to be one of the scandal-monger group, even if my taste ran that way."

"Then what the dickens is the matter?"

"Do you take me for quite a fool, Treadway? Do you think, because I am not one of those women who wear their hearts on their sleeves, that I have no sensitiveness? Have we been married so many years without my having come to know you, to know your moods? I'm not a stupid woman. I don't enjoy the blissful ignorance of one."

"How you would laugh at another woman, who based such a charge as you have been making against me, upon her feminine intuitions!" Treadway sparred for time. His brain, his heart were in tumult. Did his wife mean to overturn the edifice of life which they had raised together? And, if she did, would he be glad or sorry? The idea had never before occurred to him. Coming suddenly now, he was lost in his medley of emotions.

"I am not making any charges. I am simply stating my own position.



It was Rosamund; Rosamund, pale and thin and shabby.

I don't intend to be deceived. It's a very humiliating thing. And I base nothing on intuition. I have seen enough with my own eyes!"

"What do you mean?"

It was an ignominious position in which he found himself. He had come back from his "one day" with Rosamund feeling very sad and very noble. It had been in many ways a blameless day. They had gone to town by differ-

ent trains, and then had taken the same train for the old-beloved place of sea and sand and rough, low-growing pine that he had always wanted to show her. They had sat for hours on a deserted beach, looking across infinite blue into infinite blue. They had been lapped in melancholy and in bliss—the melancholy of impending separation, the bliss of present contact. They had had lunch together in a little inn kept open at this

season only for hunters and fishermen. There had been no one at all in the dining room, with its smoky ceiling and its bright fire and its windows looking out across sand to waters dazzling in winter sunshine. As days dedicated to personal romance go, it had been a complete success. Nothing marred it, not even a lapse into too violent passion, too abject misery. It had been a day of such self-restraint that they had told themselves they might soon dare risk another. They were going to be so wise, so self-contained, so elderly, that no reproach could attach to their meeting.

And then, when early in the afternoon they had taken a train back to town, one that would land them in ample season for Anita's dinner party, the kind gods of lovers failed them. They had not puffed their way through the low, gloomy, little forest of scrub oak and pine for more than half an hour when they jerked to a standstill. There was no station near. For ten or fifteen minutes neither Treadway nor Rosamund noticed the pause. Then they became aware of it, and became aware of the grumbling of the few passengers aboard the train. Treadway joined some of the other men outside in an investigation of the cause of delay. He came back to Rosamund looking a little disturbed.

"A downfreight," he told her, "came to grief about half a mile ahead of us. The engine ran off the track. It's lying on its side in a ditch, they say, and three cars are piled up on the track. They've sent to the yards at Long Island City for a wrecking train. Once that comes, it will be short business to get things going again."

Rosamund, wrapped in a sweet delirium, only half heard him. They would be an hour or two longer together, side by side, arm touching arm in the narrow coach seat, eyes looking into eyes. She was rather inclined to bless the disabled freight train. But

when an hour had passed and then a half hour, and emissaries sent out from the stalled train brought back a gloomy report of no assistance yet for the wreck, her consciousness of her situation began to awake. They had decided, she and Treadway, nobly and righteously, to deny themselves happiness in order that Anita might not know pain. It was going to be very stupid if a mere accident, a stupid mischance, were going to undo the effect of their high resolve, and if she were going to have her suspicions aroused, her love wounded by a mere caprice of railroad-ing, for which they were not in the least to blame! And when the delay had grown so great that there was no hope of their reaching home before dinner time, they had carefully, and for loftiest reasons, concocted the falsehood which was still to spare Anita's pride and, incidentally, their own.

And now Treadway wondered how much of all this was known to that white-lipped, severe woman, almost nunlike in her austerity, who faced him across the room. Had any wild chance sent some witness to the inn, to the shore, to the wreck? It must be so. And yet, he was sure that he had kept a careful, furtive watch upon all the people whom he had seen on that excursion. He repeated again:

"What do you mean? What have you seen; what have you heard?"

A wave of color swept Anita's face.

"Oh, don't make me repeat things that I want to forget," she cried. "Why do we have to degrade ourselves like this? Isn't it enough that I know that you have—you have ceased to love me and that you are having—an affair?"

"You must not say that!" He sprang to the defense of Rosamund.

"Oh, I don't say it is a wholly vile affair. I don't know anything about that. It may be the lightest of flirtations, the kind that half the world of men permit themselves and think no

more about. Or it may be one of those mawkish pieces of self-deception which allow the parties to it to enjoy the utmost self-approbation! But an affair with her—with this girl whom you brought into your house—you are having! And that means that you have ceased to love me."

"I have never ceased to love you!" He chose his words carefully. "Of course, I'm not a boy any more, any more than you are a girl. We've settled down into the customary married jog trot, but that doesn't mean that I have—that I have lost my affection for you, Anita."

"Let us not split hairs. Why can't we be honest with each other? Why can't we save whatever poor little shreds of dignity and decency there are left in the situation? Why do you have to cheapen everything—even our old love for each other"—her voice broke, but she hurried on—"by dissimulation? I tell you, I know you are having some kind of an affair with this girl. I'm not even reproaching you about it. I am perfectly willing you should regard it as your own business, and not mine—if you can! But my business is to see that I am treated with honesty, that we don't waste time and—integrity—in pretending to each other. You and she have been together to-day?"

Before her knowledge, however gained, and her insistence upon the truth, he answered honestly, though with a quiet, almost sullen:

"Yes."

"You are in love with her? You think you are in love with her?" The words she found almost strangled her, but she forced them through the stricture in her throat.

"I will tell you the truth. I am in love with her. She has given me back my youth and all the tenderness and warmth I had thought gone forever. It isn't her fault. I don't think it is altogether mine. Love goes where it wills.

Sometimes it just—disappears—nowhere—like yours for me. I am in love with her. But I swear to you, Anita that——"

Anita raised a weary hand to stay his protestations.

"Never mind all that," she interrupted. "What do you mean to do about it?"

"Hang it all, Anita, you make me feel like a witness on the stand! What would you naturally expect us to do about it? After all, I am a man of principle, and, as I have told you, I have never ceased to love you; only marriage and the kind of life you have elected—we have elected—to live, have changed the sort of love. What do we mean to do about it? What do you suppose? We mean to give each other up! You make me talk like an old-fashioned hero on the stage. But that is what we mean to do. She—you don't need to be told, Anita, that she is as clear and high and——"

"Oh, yes," Anita interrupted impatiently. "I know all about the immaculate purity and nobility of women in her situation. There! There! Don't look as if you wanted to bite my head off, Tread. Give me credit for a little human feeling and forgive me for a little irritation. I am sure that—she—Miss Fergus—doesn't contemplate entering upon a career of crime. You needn't reassure me about that. Where is she going from here?"

"I don't know. I'm not to know," Treadway spoke almost boastfully, "for a long time. Not until time has burned away the dross from our affections. You understand me."

"As I said before, I'm not quite a fool," interrupted Anita grimly. She reflected a moment. "I think that is the best thing you can do—to part," she went on. "There's no sense in playing with fire. Has she got any money?"

"She's going to let me lend her some—a little," he answered doggedly, red-

dening slightly. "She insists upon giving me a note for it."

"That's all nonsense. She had better owe it to me. I dare say she won't like it as well, but it's better. Find out her bank, if you will, and I will make a deposit to her account. It will be better than foolish, incriminating notes and things. She can pay me back at her leisure."

"Anita, you are a good sort," he told her with a sort of reluctant admiration in his voice.

CHAPTER XIII.

Treadway, coming into Anita's office, found Stephen Watts seated beside her. He had not seen Stephen for several months. Anita, since Rosamund had departed from their house, had had very few of her own set in it. Dutifully, if uninspiredly, she had been acting the part of a wife anxious to avoid giving her husband ground for offense. She had delegated as much of her work as possible to her subordinates; she had not brought its atmosphere home with her. She had played with his friends and at the games he liked. She had not enjoyed the procedure, and she had made no pretense of particularly enjoying it. But she felt that she was doing her full part in the situation that had sprung up with Rosamund's departure. If she had interfered with his pleasure, refused him the companionship he had desired, she would make an equal sacrifice herself.

"Glad to see you, Watts," said Treadway cordially enough. "Where have you been keeping yourself? I haven't seen you since Christmas."

"Oh, I'm supposed to be the original hermit crab," answered Stephen. "But, as a matter of fact, I don't think I've been invited out to your house."

"Oh, I know how you hate the social sort of thing," said Anita, briefly explanatory, not at all apologetic. She turned to Treadway, giving a glance at

her wrist watch. "Is it time for us to go, already? We've got to select a wedding present for my youngest sister," she explained to Stephen. She frowned. "It's an awful bore. Treadway, I'll be perfectly satisfied with anything that you select. Stephen has just brought me word of a horrid tangle that I ought to unravel. Anything at all—she's never had much and will be charmed with anything. Besides, she's marrying a minister. Won't you, Tread, be an angel and order it yourself?"

"I suppose we can put it off to some day when you are not so busy," Treadway answered stiffly. "But I had some difficulty in arranging my own affairs for this afternoon. I'm not a butterfly myself, or the thing they call a prominent clubman."

"That's it," said Anita eagerly. "It's a shame to waste your time. So why not order her a set of spoons—or anything—yourself?"

"What's your tangle?" Treadway asked.

"You wouldn't understand. Mrs. Benson has been getting things in a mess. It really looks as if I should have to come back to the practice of daily office hours."

"Don't ever marry a public woman, Watts," said Treadway, not quite achieving the air of husbandly jocularity which he evidently sought. "She'll put you and your house and your affairs where they belong—among the unconsidered trifles."

"I don't think that you have any right to say that, Treadway," Anita interrupted sharply.

Stephen hastened to pour oil on the swiftly and unexpectedly ruffled waters.

"I'll never marry any kind of a woman," answered Stephen. "I'm a humanitarian in private as well as public. I wouldn't condemn any woman to live with an uncertain, crotchety fellow like myself."

"Then you don't intend to come out

and help select Harriet's present, Anita?" Treadway dismissed the subject of marriage, and rose, looking with an air of finality at his wife.

"I can't. I'm telling you I can't." She was impatient, almost rude.

"Well, I'll be ambling along, then. 'By, Watts. I hope you'll come out some time soon. The course is pretty good this spring. Oh, I forget, you don't play golf."

He sauntered out, the incarnation of leisure in the eyes of the two he left behind. Anita frowned at the door through which he vanished. Stephen watched her questioningly, almost a little pityingly. When she brought her eyes back to him and dismissed the look of irritation from her forehead, he ventured upon a question.

"Do you think that you are quite fair to him, Anita? After all, marriage is a job, too. It's just our rotten sentimentality that has brought us to believe that it is merely a blissful state of being like the old-fashioned heaven. It's a job."

"I am perfectly fair. I am more than fair," Anita answered vigorously. "It is my being so everlastingly on the job of marriage that has allowed Mrs. Benson—oh, come, let's get down to work!"

Treadway brought his temper out into the spring sunshine. He had not the least intention of buying Harriet's wedding present alone. He had volunteered to accompany Anita on the expedition that morning only from a half-remorseful sense of duty. He knew that, although they had been much together since Rosamund's going, his thoughts, his interest, had been little with his wife. He had meant, when the girl disappeared from their lives, to make the best of the situation, to be at least a true friend, a pleasant comrade, to Anita, even if he could not be her devoted lover. He knew that he had not, as he expressed it, "pulled it off." He had been astonished, himself, to find how great the

place Rosamund had come to fill in his thoughts. He had been almost frightened at the intensity of his longing for her. It had been, then, love! While she had been accessible to him, he had allowed himself sometimes to question the reality of his feeling, to toy with the idea that it was a light thing, ephemeral, a spring day come in autumn. But when she had gone, and his longings were but increased by her absence, he told himself that it had been the real thing. Anita, with her patently dutiful air, had not sufficed, by her presence, to drive from his thoughts the lovely vision which occupied them.

And now, hang it, Anita was not even willing to supply the bodily presence! It was too bad. She was not doing her part. She was not trying to make a success of the thing. Now he, Treadway, had behaved with the nicest feeling in the matter. Much as he longed for Rosamund, he had not sought to find her—oh, if he only had the slightest idea how to go about finding her!

It was late April and the Avenue was a place of enchantment. The air was soft, though it still held a touch of coolness. It relaxed and it stimulated at the same time. Spring issued its immemorial call to woods and sweet vagrancies. The sky was softly, child-like blue—not one of those flashing, brilliant, commanding New York skies, but something as tender as the feeling of the air upon the cheek. There were flower vendors on every block. Jonquils seemed to star the long, bright procession of the Avenue's miles. Here and there a flower merchant carried a basket sweet with the delicious, woody fragrance of arbutus. It was a day for the renewal of life, for the renewal of love, a day for forgetting all stupid, winterbound things, for forgetting duties.

But if only Rosamund were with him, the very incarnation of gay, soft, kind, promising spring!

His mood melted in the influence of the afternoon. It was a shame that Anita's whim should delay Harriet's present. He would go and order it. He turned into the great goldsmith's, and, once inside the door, stopped short, breathing a little quickly. It was there, only a few months ago, that there had first passed between him and Rosamund the touch that—a quotation unsuited to his own thoughts—"fired the towers of Ilion." He went to the very place where they had stood together. He relieved the sensation of that moment, and forgot all about Harriet's spoons. By and by, completely possessed by his longing for Rosamund, he went out again into the lure of the April sunshine. Aimlessly he left the Avenue, and walked through a side street, past the little importer's shops, with their expensively scant window showings, across the eastern avenues into the region of lodging houses growing always meaner and cheaper till they gave place to tenements on the other side of the aerial black tracks that stretched like a smudge across the April blue at the far end of the street.

All sorts of people passed him, unseen. He had no eye for the shopping women or the smart little shops, no eye for the people passing before the lodging houses, no eye for anything save that vision which his longing and imagination conjured up.

When finally, from under the shadow of the elevated, she moved toward him, it seemed for a second that she was only the same phantom that had been before him all the way. But she differed from it. That phantom had been all grace and gladness, all youth, the very spirit of April, moving with hands outstretched, full of gifts and promises. The figure coming toward him moved more slowly than the dream figure, moved listlessly—why, it was real! It was Rosamund; Rosamund, pale and thin and shabby.

When he had both her little hands, in their shabby cotton gloves, clasped firmly within his own well-gloved fingers, and when the first exclamations were passed, he asked her:

"What is the matter? Why do you look like this? Why are you so white? Oh, my dear love, what has happened to you?"

She had been sick, Rosamund said. She had been miserable after she left the Holts', but she had interpreted the misery all in the terms of love denied. She had not noticed that her body as well as her spirit ached.

"And then, one night, I think it was near the end of February, I fainted. And they called the doctor. It seems I was in a bad way. They moved me to the hospital—it was all right. A lodging house isn't any place for sick people. My landlady was very kind. She found I had some money and they had me put in a pay ward. I had typhoid."

"Now where in the world did you pick up typhoid?" he demanded angrily. He had not let go her hand and they stood looking eagerly at each other, unaware of, indifferent to all the curious stares of passers-by.

"Why, the doctors seemed to think that it was the milk I used to drink sometimes at a little dairy lunch room. At any rate, they did something to the place. It *wasn't* particularly appetizing," Rosamund added reflectively, "but it was near and it was cheap, and so I used to go there."

"How long were you in the hospital?"

"Four weeks—nearly five. I didn't have an awfully bad case. I'd have been all right before this if I hadn't complicated things a little by picking up a pleurisy germ somewhere. That must have been in the hospital, because I hadn't had the chance to get out to acquire it. But don't let us talk about me any more. Tell me about you—and Jamesy—and Miss Sally—and how the

lovely house looks and how she is—your—Anita, I mean.”

“Why didn’t you let me know you were ill?” He ignored all of her questions.

“Well, you see, at first I didn’t know I was ill. I only thought I was unhappy. And then I was out of my head for a while. Then I began to get better. Besides—we had promised each other, you know—”

“You might have died!” His voice was hoarse. He held tightly to her hands. “You might have died and I not known it.”

“No, that couldn’t happen.”

“It might have happened. It almost did happen. Typhoid—pleurisy—oh, I’ll never let you out of my sight again!”

She laughed happily.

“But you will have to. That’s all been settled.”

“I’m coming home with you. I want to talk with you. We’ve got to arrange things differently; we’ve got to arrange things better, so that a thing like this, a dreadful thing like this, could never happen again. I’m going home with you.”

“You can’t.” Rosamund laughed again her happy laugh. All that she had undergone, all that might yet be in store for her, were forgotten, negligible, in the moment’s delight of seeing him again. “The very first thing my landlady said to me was that no followers were allowed at her house. There is no place for them. She lets out the drawing-room, and she won’t allow her women lodgers to receive men in their own rooms. She’s a perfect tartar of respectability! So you can’t come there to see me.” Some sparkle had come back to her eyes and some color to her cheeks as she talked.

A hansom off its beat was cruising slowly down the street. Treadway hailed it and in an instant they were inside, and he was shouting to the driver to go to the park and to drive through

it. And then the little trapdoor in the roof fell shut and the big curtaining doors in front closed them in, and the two were alone in that perambulating, friendly isolation, beloved of lovers since first the amiable Hansom invented his “patent-safety cab.”

They were not the stuff of which heroes and martyrs are made. They were illogical, glad, human. Their hands, stripped of gloves, clung together. Their eyes dwelt upon each other, adored each other. Their voices were tender and murmurous, and the things they said to each other, foolish, old, world-worn things. “Do you still love me?” he said to her. And “Oh, my dear, you know that I shall love you forever!” she answered. They found in the fact of their meeting a benison upon their love from the higher powers, a reward for their abstinence, a signal that it was vain for them to try to live without seeing each other. At one of the park restaurants it occurred to him that it was time for tea, and they sat out upon a terrace, under vines beginning to glow faintly with a promise of green leaf and purple blossom in a little while. There were boxes of pansies and of English daisies about them. The grass below the terrace was very green. The people who were drinking tea looked gay and prosperous. Life was meant to be enjoyed; love was given that it might be happy—that was the burden of the whole day for them.

Only when he took her back to the eminently respectable lodging house did she look again pale, and did doubt and distress begin to cloud her lovely eyes. But he banished her sadness by the resolution with which he spoke.

“This has got to end, this silly separation,” he told her resonantly. “We can’t live apart. We’ve tried it and it doesn’t work. It’s not our fault. It’s our fate. We are not going to try to any longer.”

"But I—but I——" She began falteringly and then broke off, to begin again by and by: "You mustn't misunderstand me! You mustn't think that, because I love you and cannot live without you—I am willing to—I am willing to——"

"I don't misunderstand anything," he assured her, still stalwart, still resonant. "I know that you are all that is honest, all that is clean. I shall never ask you to lower your colors. But—I'm not planning any wrong to Anita. She doesn't care for me. She hasn't cared for me for years. Any committee is

more to her than I am. Our living together is a farce. We have tried it and it doesn't work. It's an empty shell, our marriage. She will be as glad as I to throw it away. Of course, there is going to be a lot of pain in getting rid of the husk of our old lives—that is inevitable. But we are strong enough to bear pain; aren't we, Rosamund? Strong enough even to inflict pain—although it will be only her pride that will be hurt. We are strong for that; aren't we, my dear one?"

"To bear anything," sobbed Rosamund, "except not seeing each other."

TO BE CONCLUDED NEXT MONTH.



A LOOK BACKWARD

THERE'S something in the big dim moon
One sometimes sees, all strange and blind,
With one bright edge, as if behind
Were radiance to be visioned soon
Just peeping forth—that haunts me like a tune.

For once upon a time, the west
Deepened—it had been bird-egg blue,
With threads of palest gold shot through,
And that warm planet I love best,
Bold Mars, was evening star, the kingliest.

The air was honeysuckle drenched;
A lady moth drummed by to sup
On the long, fallow, scented cup.
The fires of that June day were quenched,
And every lily head stood bravely up.

We sat, we two, and watched that shred
Of new moon on the old one's edge.
You, with the bookman's privilege,
Quoted a ballad long since dead—
"The old moon in the young moon's arms," you said.

You had advantage there, for I
Was little versed in poet lore,
But quick in other things, before
You spoke them, I had guessed your shy
Love-breathings. I was wiser, days gone by!
JEANNIE PENDLETON HALL.



WHAT THE STARS SAY

by Madame Renée Longuille

To the Heavens above us O look and behold
The Planets that love us, all harnessed in gold!
What chariots, what horses against us shall bide
While the stars in their courses do fight on our side?

RUDYARD KIPLING.

HOW TO READ YOUR OWN HOROSCOPE

LESSON IV.

PISCES, the twelfth and last sign of the zodiac, is a mutable, water sign. When it is found on the horizon of any nativity at birth, it denotes a somewhat restless, emotional, and mediumistic character. It is said that "a wise man rules his stars and a fool obeys," but natives coming under the influence of this easy-going sign find it very difficult to rule their planets. They seem to be swept on by some impelling force to their fate, either good or bad, without the ability to resist. Strange emotions play through them which they cannot understand. They are subjects who may be easily psychologized. Their fate seems to depend on the mental atmosphere around them. At times they are very secretive and quiet. The most fortunate aspect of this sign, and that in which the best qualities seem to be evident in the character, is that which results when between ten and twenty degrees are found on the horizon. Many mediumistic people have this sign rising at birth.

In appearance these subjects are usually not very handsome. They are

rather short of stature, with poorly made figures. Their faces are generally large and pale, with delicately soft skin. There is also a decided tendency to a double chin as years advance. The eyes are often bulging and large.

Two planets are said to rule this sign—the great, benefic Jupiter, and the secretive, spiritual Neptune. It is symbolized by the two fishes.

Next to be considered in the constructing and interpreting of our "maps," are the nine most important planets and their natures. Their positions in houses and signs indicate "high lights" in life. Wherever they happen to fall they intensify that phase of life which the sign or house indicates. When we speak of a planet's influence, we really mean the vibrations which arise from the nature and spirit of the special star.

The Sun and Moon are referred to as luminaries. Mercury, Venus, Mars, Jupiter, Saturn, Uranus, and Neptune are planets. These last five are identified with the senses, since Mercury governs sight; Venus, touch; Mars,

taste; Jupiter, smell; Saturn, hearing; Uranus, clairvoyancy, and Neptune, psychometry.

The great, life-giving Sun seems to stand in each chart as the symbol of individual character. Sir Isaac Newton said of the Sun: "Nature is simple and does nothing in vain. The Sun gives life, heat, and light to all plants; it is the storehouse of the vital force, and from that glorious body issue the life currents which animate every living thing on earth." In judging a chart of life, strange as it may seem, the great and glorious luminary is not studied as carefully as the Moon, which borrows its light and illumination from the Sun. The influence of the Sun is more or less like that of Mars. If, on a nativity, it happens to be rising or in the first house, the character may be judged as being somewhat proud and bold. If the Moon is in good aspect to the Sun, success and a rise in life are denoted. But, in bad aspect, the reverse is the case. When any other planet is found very near the Sun, the latter destroys the power of the close planet and takes on the character itself. It is very important that the Sun should be free from the afflicting planets in order to produce success in life, except in the case of Mars, whose presence might simply augur a military character.

The Moon's position at birth has a very significant influence on every person. The aspect it receives from other planets is also very important. If the Sun and Moon are within five degrees, or less, of each other, on a chart, that native will surely be of a weak constitution. It is said that any person born during an eclipse of the Sun will be unfortunate and may live only a short time. The Moon, severely afflicted by Saturn, will cause distress to that part of the body ruled by the sign containing Saturn at birth. For instance, if Saturn be found in Taurus,

afflicting the Moon, that native may be cautioned about trouble with the throat, since Taurus rules the throat. If he be found in Cancer, the stomach will suffer, because Cancer signifies the stomach.

When Pisces contains the afflicting Saturn, natives will suffer from corns and bunions aplenty. Thus, throughout the zodiac, wherever the malefic Saturn is situated, that part of the body signified will suffer, especially if Saturn be in bad aspect to the Moon.

The good aspects of the Moon and Mercury are very important in a horoscope, auguring a good, clever wit and mind. Assuming that the beautiful Moon be found in the first house at birth, we shall find that more strength will then be given to the sign ascending. In this case a very changeable, roaming disposition is indicated. The native will never be contented to stay in one place or line of work for very long. Again, if the Moon be up in the top of the chart, near the meridian or line which runs from top to bottom, and be receiving good vibrations from Mercury, the native will probably be clever and successful through his own good qualities. Jupiter, in good aspect to the Moon, means wealth and prosperity; to Venus, very attractive manners and a good disposition; to Mars, success in military affairs or, in a high-type map, as a surgeon or, in a less developed life, as a butcher. Naturally, the Moon receiving unfortunate rays from any of these planets, the good qualities are missing. Evil influences playing between the Moon, Mars, and Mercury, the native may at times be dishonest.

The Moon's constellation is Cancer. When this planet is ruler of a nativity the love of change will be very evident. Its colors are white, pale yellow, and pale green. Its precious stones are the moonstone, opal, and white and pale-green jewels. Its metal is silver.

Mercury, the little star which the astronomers call the "dayless, seasonless, yearless planet," is very peculiar in character inasmuch as it seems to be neither positive nor negative, and at the same time both. It is of the next greatest importance, after the Sun and Moon, in the judging of any "map of life." At times it is racing through the heavens; and again its motion is slow and steady, giving to its characters energy, wit, and buoyancy of spirit. When it changes suddenly, depression and the deepest "blues" will be felt from its influence. If this queer little changeable star be poised in a native's first house, it causes great restlessness and a desire for change. The mind of the native will be tireless and much given to reading. This planet is one of the important rulers of the mind. Therefore, all planets throwing any influence upon it must be noted. Mercury must be found at some distance from the Sun to indicate any abilities for success. If, at the same time, the evil planets are throwing unfortunate rays upon Mercury, and the Moon is also afflicted, it is safe to say that the native is really weak-minded. If no help can be found among the horizon, the Moon, and Mercury, the native may even be idiotic, or become so.

In some positions, it is a good augury to find Mercury in advance of the Sun. Alan Leo, the great English astrologer, once said: "Mercury, accompanying the soul into Hades, represents the silver thread of memory, upon which are strung the beads which represent the personalities of its earth life." This eccentric, irregular planet and its nature have given rise to the term, "mercuried," as applied to individual character. We have all known people of a "mercurial" disposition. Inventions are ruled by Mercury. Quick-

silver is its metal. Black and blue are its colors. The precious stones are the agate and marcasite.

Answers to Correspondents

Mrs. C. C.—Born December 25, 1899, 8.50 p. m., Oklahoma.—You have a very critical mind, which at times tends to be keenly sensitive. Often you find yourself in a deep argument without knowing who started it. The positions of your planets denote a very nervous, and sometimes irritable personality. Your friends may often blame you, and not without cause, for being somewhat stubborn or contrary. This year, while you are twenty-one, I find many obstacles, vexations, and troubles for you to overcome, because the Moon is heavily afflicted by the Sun and Mars. Would advise you to keep as quiet as possible during the year, and to be careful of your health and conduct. Before making any move or decision, think over the situation for at least three or four days. In 1921 there is a change for the better in the way of health and money.

Miss A. W.—Born September 10, 1890, 11.30 p. m., Mississippi.—Your personality is not in harmony with your character. However, your nature is affectionate, and at times much given to feeling. This year, 1920, the Moon comes into conjunction with Saturn, causing a period of deep depression. The year 1923 brings one of the biggest changes in your whole life, which will aid you in helping yourself. In 1927 it is plainly to be seen that you will fall deeply in love and very likely be married. It brings events of much interest in your life.

Mr. J. L. O.—Born January 24, 1886, 4 a. m., Kansas.—Your chart denotes ambition, some restlessness, good reasoning power, and a tendency toward making comparisons. You have a somewhat sharp, quick temper, but your outbursts are soon over, and leave no hard feelings nor desire for revenge in your mind. I predict a wonderful rise in life for you, and money through law partnerships or marriage. This year, 1920, Saturn is causing you many drawbacks and irritations. You may feel very energetic and have many schemes, but it will be best to wait until next year to test them. A wonderful influence is coming into your life when you are thirty-nine or thereabouts, which will cause a decided change in your viewpoint and life. An eventful life is before you.





The Middle Against Both Ends



By Roy W. Hinds

A clever story by a writer new to the pages of SMITH'S. We predict you will like him.

QUITE early in life, Jane married a man. Jane was very loving and trustful, and the only thing that stood between her and a life of blissful rectitude and contentment was the man she married.

She met him in the little Jersey town where she lived. How he came there and why he came there she learned later. In the little town he made himself known as Horace Dockman, a young man of sterling integrity. In other quarters of this wide land he was known as "Inker" Dockman, a young man of stealing integrity.

Mr. Dockman, who came to Jane's home town to dash off a few swift and precise strokes of forgery, for his agility at which he had been dubbed "Inker," wisely forbore carrying out his designs after he met Jane. It is likely that he would have sailed under another name had he not met Jane, but even a rapid-fire crook can find time to fall in love. He carried the thing off with characteristic dash and celerity. A handsome man he was, groomed as no young man in that town had ever been, and with a tongue for sweet words and soft phrases. There were many other places where he could sign other men's names to checks, but there was only one town surrounding the delightful Jane. Having attained more or less distinction by winning the town's prettiest girl, it would be folly to perform there. His crimes would

be discovered sooner or later, and the authorities could easily trace him through Jane.

Thus, Jane unknowingly saved the good citizens of her home town quite a tidy sum of money.

They were married. They were really and truly married, because Jane was the first wife Horace Dockman had had. Undoubtedly he loved her. He proved that later, through many years, by clinging closely to her, to the exclusion of all other women, and laying costly gifts at her trim feet.

Horace Dockman brought his bride to the great city. The very first day he took her on a shopping tour. Later he taught her to shop alone. He taught her to bring home many things, and to forget the ordinary processes of trade, such as the formality of paying for her selections. He outfitted her with garments in which could be concealed such trifles as lingerie, silk waists, kid gloves, jewels, and trinkets—and anything else having desirable value and suitable portableness. An old woman friend of the husband instructed Jane in the gentle arts of "brushing" a counter, "scooping" a gem tray, and "flipping" a glove box.

At first, Jane took unkindly to the idea, but by subterfuges and honeyed words, and playing always upon her vast and wholesome love for him, Inker Dockman induced her to keep on and on—until she had traveled so

far along the downward path that she thought it useless to attempt a return.

Thus we introduce "Filmy Jane," as she came to be known among her husband's friends and the police, because of her fondness for filmy laces and silks and stealable goods of exquisite richness. She wouldn't hesitate to lift trinkets of precious metals and rare gems, but somehow, from the very first, Jane leaned strongly to counter displays of soft and delicate textures—and the richest of them were no softer and no more delicate than her bejeweled and tapering fingers.

Midway between thirty and forty, Filmy Jane was a striking-looking woman—rather tall, and ample to just that fine shade between slenderness and stoutness. Always gowned and hatted and shod in a fashion touching the highest peaks of taste and style, Jane deported herself with a certain democratic regality which at once charmed and blinded saleswomen and absolutely bereft floorwalkers of the last shreds of discernment.

There were other things about Jane which in no way stood as obstacles to her subtle designs—a rich contralto voice, gentle blue eyes of charming and wide-open frankness, delicate features, and a complexion fresh as a morning breeze in the meadows encircling her home town.

Inker Dockman and Filmy Jane had been husband and wife something like sixteen years when, one day, Mr. Dockman saw fit to call upon Lyman Tuckerberry, a lawyer known among crooks as a wonderful fixer and a man who, for a consideration, would stop at nothing to alibi a criminal out of jail. Mr. Tuckerberry, a tall, bony man, had offices in Chambers Street. He was glad to see Mr. Dockman. He knew him.

"I hope you're not in difficulties this time," observed the legal gentleman, in his private office. "Perhaps," he sug-

gested as an afterthought, "you have come to make a social call."

"No," replied Mr. Dockman, "this is not a social call."

Mr. Tuckerberry thought he detected traces of worryment in the manner of the spick-and-span Inker Dockman.

"Perhaps," he further suggested, "you have come to see me in the interests of a friend—a friend who is in difficulties. Let us hope that it is a happier mission—but I am ready to serve you in happiness or in trouble."

Mr. Dockman brought his wavering senses together abruptly and sat up rigidly. He announced:

"I'm in trouble—that's so; but not with the police. It's more serious than that. I want a divorce."

Mr. Tuckerberry was shocked by this revelation. He knew Mr. Dockman's wife, Filmy Jane. He inquired sympathetically:

"A divorce! You surely do not mean that?"

"Yes, I mean it," Inker declared doggedly. He set his lips in grim determination. "There's no other way out of it," he volunteered.

"My, my! I cannot understand that. Mrs. Dockman—I have met Mrs. Dockman, as you well know—is such a charming lady, and you always thought so much of each—"

"That's over now," the grieved husband snapped. "Let's get down to business. Just how does a man get a divorce?"

"And you are quite sure there is no hope of an amicable adjustment?"

"No hope. Let's talk business."

This is exactly what Mr. Tuckerberry wished. He didn't wish an amicable settlement, because happy couples do not require lawyers, and lawyers must have fees. Mr. Tuckerberry was the sort of lawyer to whom the fee came first. But he couldn't dive into the case without some show of friendly interest.

"My, my!" he commiserated. "A man never knows what's going on next door in this world. I would have staked all I have on Mr. and Mrs. Horace Dockman. Many the time I've said to myself: 'There's a couple!'"

"I need a lawyer to get me a divorce," suggested Mr. Dockman. He surveyed the barrister with an eye somewhat bleak with warning.

"Yes, yes," the lawyer hastened to assure him. "And you shall have your divorce, if there is no other way out of it. Now, Mr. Dockman, what are your grounds for seeking a divorce?"

"Well, the grounds—why, we can't get along; that's the grounds."

"But there must be something more tangible than that. Some specific cause of disagreement, I might suggest. Divorces cannot be obtained on the ground merely of family squabbles, unless the trouble can be shown in court to be beyond repair, and both parties seek the divorce."

"Well, we can't get along—we can't live together." He added in a milder tone: "Mrs. Dockman knows that as well as I do."

"Ah, then, that simplifies matters. Mrs. Dockman is willing that you get a divorce, is that it, and will not contest your suit?"

"She ought to be willing," the husband mumbled rather uncertainly. "She knows we can't get along."

"But have you talked the question of a divorce over with her?"

"No, not yet."

"And she doesn't know that you contemplate filing suit?"

"I don't think she does."

"Um-m-m," mused the puzzled counselor. "That makes it rather uncertain, doesn't it? Well, are you and Mrs. Dockman separated?"

"Yes. She's living at home—in the apartment. I'm stopping at a hotel. We've been separated nearly a month now."

"And you haven't seen each other in the meantime?"

"No, we haven't met." With a great show of determination: "And we're not *going* to meet, if I can help it!"

"May I inquire, Mr. Dockman, if there is another woman in the case?"

"She thinks there is," Dockman admitted.

"Does she think rightly?"

"No—not exactly."

"But she has some grounds for suspicion, is that it?"

"Very little grounds—although I have taken another woman to the theater and to dinner occasionally."

"And Mrs. Dockman knows that?"

"Sure, she knows it. I told her."

"And how did you come to tell her?"

"We had a quarrel one night and I blurted it out."

"Very indiscreet—decidedly indiscreet, I should say!" The lawyer studied his client thoughtfully and then asked: "You will pardon the question, but have you any grounds for a similar action——"

"Absolutely not!" Dockman interrupted with some heat. "Mrs. Dockman is as good a woman as there is in the world."

"Of course—to be sure! But I am merely trying to get at every angle of the case. Now then, can't you think of some reasonable grounds for divorce, something that we can back the suit up with, if Mrs. Dockman should contest our claims?"

"Nothing except that we quarreled a lot the last few months we lived together. We quarreled about almost everything. But the main thing was—well, she wanted to quit this—the way we live, you understand."

"Ah, I see. Mrs. Dockman wished to abandon the—ah—somewhat precarious manner of life you have been living. And you couldn't afford to do that, is that it?"

"That's it exactly. That's the way

I make my living. It's the only way I know *how* to make a living."

With his eye on the prospective fee, the lawyer inquired:

"But it has been a very good living, has it not, Mr. Dockman?"

"I'm well enough fixed financially and so is she; but a man always likes to be making a little more."

"Of course, to be sure; and Mrs. Dockman objected to continuing the manner of life to which you have always been accustomed. Now then, supposing that I interview Mrs. Dockman—not giving her any idea, of course, that you have been to see me—and learn just how she feels in regard to a divorce. I have called at your home before; I have been your guest there, as you well recall, on two different occasions—once when I got you out of a little difficulty, and another time, after I had worked in Mrs. Dockman's behalf. I could call at the apartment. I know nothing about the separation. Naturally, she would confide in me, and thereupon I would draw her out as to how she feels in regard to a divorce. We can do nothing until we know just what we can expect from Mrs. Dockman."

"I think that's a good idea," admitted the husband. "Do that this evening, will you? To-morrow I'll be in again."

"It shall be done. And now, Mr. Dockman, in cases of this——"

Before Horace Dockman left the lawyer's office he was poorer by one hundred dollars, and had signed an agreement to pay Lyman Tuckerberry two thousand dollars if a suit was filed, and four thousand dollars if he obtained an absolute divorce.

Before Lyman Tuckerberry arrived that evening at the apartment house where lived the deserted Filmy Jane, a grand idea had crystallized into a grand scheme, which, if things went well, would fatten the Tuckerberry exchequer immensely.

Filmy Jane, with traces of late tears hastily concealed, met Lyman Tuckerberry at the door of her apartment, after he had been announced. They were soon seated in the living room. The lawyer was a good actor and he impressed the woman with his sheer surprise over the Dockman domestic difficulties.

"Well, Mrs. Dockman," he finally suggested softly, "it is a hopeless life—this life that you and he have been leading. It was a wonderful thing for you to try to break him and yourself away from it; it would be still more wonderful if you *could* get away from it! But I'm afraid, my dear Mrs. Dockman, that Inker——"

"Oh, how I detest that name!" she exclaimed. "'Inker'—it's horrible to live a life where every man and woman is known by such nicknames! They call me 'Filmy Jane'! One of his friends had the nerve to call me that to my face here one night, but Horace threw him out before he could say another word. 'Inker' and 'Filmy Jane'—ugh!"

"I beg your pardon, Mrs. Dockman," Mr. Tuckerberry hastened to say. "I don't know how that name came into my mind. I've never called him anything but Mr. Dockman before. I don't know, I'm sure, how——"

"Oh, it's all right," she said wearily. "It's part of the life. They call him 'Inker' and they call me 'Filmy Jane,' and they'll call us that until we get so far away from them that—that——"

She ceased speaking, in utter hopelessness. The lawyer came in with a timely suggestion:

"I'm afraid, Mrs. Dockman, that your husband's life is so hopelessly bound up with the things you detest that—I don't wish to discourage you, but—but, well you understand it as well as I do. Isn't it a pity that he can't be brought to your way of thinking? But I'm afraid—I'm afraid!"

"So far as I am concerned," she announced resolutely, "I'm done with that life, and I'm done—I'm done with him unless—unless he gives it up, too. I've made up my mind to that."

"And you can't be blamed in the least."

"Surely I can't be blamed!" She turned her frank blue eyes upon the crafty old lawyer. "Isn't there some way—*some way*?" she pleaded.

"Yes," he stated. He spoke as if he had arrived at a momentary conclusion. "Yes, there is a way."

She searched his eyes hopefully but did not speak.

"It occurs to me," he continued, "that Horace Dockman should be frightened. If he loves you, the scare will bring him to time. If he doesn't love you, the bluff should be carried to a full conclusion—and you would be much better off. But he should be frightened."

"Frightened? How?"

"Why don't you sue him for a divorce?"

The idea, no doubt, had occurred to Filmy Jane on more than one occasion, but it shocked her to have it put into so many words. She stared. Then she brightened—with an effort.

"I suppose I'll have to do that—even-
tually," she admitted.

"Possibly you won't have to go through with it, if you start it now. If he is willing to permit you to get a divorce, it is far better, of course, that you get one. It may be rather unprofessional of me—not strictly according to legal ethics, you understand—to suggest such a thing. But I am talking as a friend. I wouldn't handle the case myself—you can find many lawyers ready to do that, but—"

"But I would want you to handle it if I brought a suit," Filmy Jane protested. "You're the only lawyer I know."

"Well, of course, I'm a lawyer—open for business; but it doesn't seem right

for me to suggest a legal action and then profit by it."

"But I should want to engage you."

"It must be of your own free wish."

"It is my own free wish, and I should like to engage you right now."

"Very well. And now I should advise that you bring suit for divorce on the ground of desertion."

They talked long and earnestly. Filmy Jane relieved, somehow, that matters were about to reach a crisis. She felt that Horace Dockman would come running back when he learned of the suit—and then she had a darting fear that he wouldn't come running back.

As the lawyer was departing, he said:

"Of course, Mrs. Dockman, in cases of this kind, it is customary—"

Whereupon Filmy Jane found herself poorer by one hundred dollars, and had signed an agreement to pay Lyman Tuckerberry one thousand dollars upon the filing of the contemplated suit, and three thousand dollars if an absolute divorce was obtained.

On his homeward way, Lyman Tuckerberry arrived at a momentous decision. Said he to his inward self: "One of my clients must leave the city. There is too much love there for safety. There is no danger of Horace Dockman returning to Jane Dockman unless she invites him—he is too stubborn. There is danger of Jane Dockman capitulating and rushing madly back into the arms of Horace Dockman. In that event, I would lose two clients. Horace Dockman can be trusted alone. I must have Jane Dockman within reach all the time. Horace Dockman is the client to send far away from the city." Then the old rascal squelched what few feeble sparks of contrition sputtered in his frigid conscience with this: "It is the very best thing that could happen to the woman. She wants to abandon her life of thievery, and she can't do it unless

she is freed of Horace Dockman. I will save her. Why shouldn't I? And while I am saving her, why shouldn't I get a little of the money which has come so easily to them?"

There was a conference next day in the offices of Lyman Tuckerberry. The conferees were Lyman Tuckerberry and Horace Dockman.

Said Mr. Tuckerberry:

"Mrs. Dockman, I am very sorry to say, shows no desire for an amicable adjustment. Her position is very much the same as yours—that it is impossible for you further to live together."

"Did she say that?" demanded Inker Dockman.

"Well, she indicated that very plainly. She was, I regret to say, singularly uninterested in the matter—rather listless and preoccupied, I should say—and terminated the interview when I suggested that your affairs might be straightened out peaceably. I really don't think you should stop your proposed suit now, and I would suggest caution."

"What do you mean—caution?"

"I mean that we should build up a solid case before the suit is filed. She is uncommunicative as to what her attitude will be."

"Uncommunicative — uninterested, eh?" Dockman repeated with awakening ire. "Well, I'll awaken her interest. I'll file suit to-day!"

"Not too hasty, if you please," Mr. Tuckerberry interposed. "There are several details first to be picked up. For one thing, the suit must be filed in New Jersey."

"How's that?"

"Divorces are not granted in New York State on grounds of incompatibility. It requires far more serious grounds than that to get a divorce in this State. That is one detail."

"Well, go ahead; file it in New Jersey."

"Where were you married, Mr.

Dockman?" He already knew, but Inker gave him the name of the little town in south Jersey. "In New Jersey, eh? That is fortunate. How would you like to go to that town and live for a few months?"

"I wouldn't like it!"

"Do you, Inker Dockman, want to file a suit for divorce in Jersey City or any other town close to New York, and air your affairs before the police? Do you want the papers to print stories about Inker Dockman and Filmy Jane getting a divorce? Do you want them to dig up the facts as to who your wife really is, and have her billed as a shop-lifter in her home town? Do you want the police to know about these domestic affairs, as they *will* know if the suit is filed in the metropolitan district?"

"I certainly don't want any of that stuff to happen," averred Inker Dockman, who was beginning to see things in a more serious light.

"Then, why not go to that little town, live unostentatiously for a time, and bring the suit quietly, away down in south New Jersey? It will hardly be known outside that town. A few old friends will remember her—her relatives have gone long ago—and that's all there will be to it. They will know nothing about her being Filmy Jane. When it is all over, you can come back to New York, and she can return to the little town to live the life she wants to live. Besides that, you can run into the city now and then and—and—pardon me—transact a little of the business at which you are so adept. It is the best thing that I can suggest."

Mr. Dockman capitulated, with the matter placed before him in that light. The lawyer took care always to hold in front of him the specter of Filmy Jane's indifference, and that aroused the natural stubbornness of Inker Dockman into a headstrong determination to get a divorce as quickly and completely as possible.

"Mrs. Dockman need know nothing about this," the counselor told him, "until the suit is filed. In the meantime I will strive to convince her of the futility of contesting a suit—if she should be so disposed. And I—it is possible that I may draw upon you from time to time for a trifle of expense money."

Thus Horace Dockman went back to the sleepy little town in which he had met his first and only love and took up a simple and unostentatious life. He was almost forgotten by the townspeople. He lived in a boarding house, and a plea of illness and a love for the peaceful life during the summer were sufficient to answer any inquiries as to what he was doing there.

With that end of his case disposed of, Lyman Tuckerberry proceeded to fix things up at the other end. He told Filmy Jane he had interviewed Horace Dockman. He told her sadly that her suspicions as to the other woman were only too true, and advised suit on serious grounds.

Filmy Jane consented. There was nothing else for her to do. To all appearances, all was over between her and Horace Dockman. It were far better to be separated legally as well as in fact.

"And now, Mrs. Dockman," pursued the family counselor, "it is best that you get another apartment, a place unknown to any of your friends or your husband's friends."

Filmy Jane had a vague fear that a move of this kind would forever cut her off from her husband. If he should wish to return, he wouldn't know where to find her. She asked: "Why is that necessary?"

"Your husband has many friends—the very people you must break away from. He is a man of honor himself, but many of his friends, knowing of your domestic troubles, might decide to help him in his case; help him to pre-

pare a defense, if he wished to retaliate. They might—don't you understand?—attempt to compromise you; to make it appear—ah—that you are not a loyal wife. There are many strange and cunning characters among Mr. Dockman's friends, you understand."

"I understand," she agreed weakly, "but if Horace——"

"Naturally," he interposed, "Mr. Dockman will learn that I am your attorney. He will learn that when the papers are served on him. If he *should* wish to see you personally, he can learn your address from me. That is the first thing he would do if he were seeking you."

This was logical and perfectly clear, and Filmy Jane placed her whole happiness in the hands of Lyman Tuckerberry. It was so nice to have a lawyer who took an intensely professional and a profoundly friendly interest in one's affairs!

"It will be some time before the suit is filed," he told her. "We must have a strong case before we show our cards. In the meantime, I—it may be necessary for me to draw upon you for bits of expense money."

Filmy Jane moved into a far-away neighborhood of the city. One afternoon she called up the hotel where her husband had been living at last account. She didn't intend to talk to him. She merely wanted to learn whether he was still there. She was informed that Mr. Dockman, though that was not the name by which the hotel knew him, had departed some time ago and had left no forwarding address.

Whereupon Filmy Jane wept. Soon she dried her tears and steeled herself for the inevitable. Over and over again she assured herself that the separation was for the best, and for a time was quite cheerful over the prospect of a peaceful life, far away from the sordid and knavish life of recent years. Then she became unutterably lonely.

Horace Dockman, in the little Jersey town, fell into the habit of wandering aimlessly about the streets, particularly after nightfall. It was summer. Scarcely before he knew it, these walks had come to be over a certain course. Invariably they led to the river bank along which he, the young crook, and Jane, the girl, had strolled in the brief days of his ardent courtship. The same meditative trees overhung the river path. The same rustic bench squatted upon its unshapely legs in a little copse-inclosed bower. From there he wandered into the town, pausing for a moment before the little house where Jane had lived with her mother. The mother was dead now. Jane had almost refused to come back to him after the funeral.

A strange family occupied the house now. Standing under the elm tree which canopied the gravel walk in front of the house—standing as he often did—he saw the light in the window. He saw strange figures moving about within, fleeting shadows—the shadows of strangers. Somehow he resented their occupancy of the house. Every night he resented it, and every night he walked briskly away, with the unanswered question in his mind: "What do I care?"

One night he found himself on the river path before he knew it. The ground was soft and his footsteps made no sound. Slowly, scarcely without thought, the troubled crook stepped toward the rustic bench. There was a frightened exclamation from the bench, a fluttering of skirts, whispered words of surprise—and gentle sobs.

They walked back into the little town and along the street where she lived as a girl. In front of the house they paused without suggestion but with mutual understanding. For a long time they stood, silent, beneath the shading elm. Finally he spoke.

"It's for sale," he said simply.

Then they went on their way—talking; and what they said no one but themselves ever learned.

"I must go back to New York in the morning," Jane announced, as they stood in front of the little hotel where she was stopping. She was thinking of the suit for divorce which Lyman Tuckerberry was likely to file at any moment.

"I must go back, too," he told her. So was he thinking of the suit for divorce which Lyman Tuckerberry was likely to file any moment—file by mail in this same little town.

Each mentally assured himself that the other would never know of the contemplated suit. They went to New York next morning.

Lyman Tuckerberry was contented. He had both ends of the case sewed tightly. He had Horace Dockman and Jane Dockman completely out of touch with each other. The woman often had said she never would return to the old town until she was freed of Horace Dockman. The lawyer had not considered sufficiently to what extreme loneliness will drive a woman. He had everything fixed so that neither would know he was counsel for the other. He would conduct two uncontested suits. As counsel for Jane Dockman, he would serve the papers on Horace Dockman. As counsel for Horace Dockman, he would receive the papers. In the New Jersey case, things would work out the same. There would be no record of Jane Dockman's divorce in New Jersey, and there would be no record of Horace Dockman's divorce in New York. It wasn't likely that the two would ever meet again.

"They surely will not be man and wife when I get through with them," chuckled Mr. Tuckerberry. "They will be thoroughly and sufficiently divorced, I should say."

Just then the door opened and Horace Dockman walked in. He asked:

"You haven't filed my suit yet, have you?"

"The papers are ready. I will mail them to-day."

"You needn't bother. Mrs. Dockman and myself——"

"Where did you see Mrs. Dockman?"

"Oh, she came down home for a visit. We fixed things up. I sort of got stuck on the simple life down there. I'm going to buy out a little cigar store down there and we're going to take the old home back."

The lawyer at once knew there had been an inseparable reunion. He knew, too, that neither client was aware of his dealings with the other. That was evident in the manner of the husband. He rightly deduced that neither wanted the other to know of a contemplated suit for divorce. He felt serene and safe.

"I'll have to assess the fee, at any rate," he announced coldly. "Two thousand dollars for the filing of the suit. The case is completed and I have earned the money. In matters of——"

"That's all right—I'll pay."

Just then the door of the outer room opened. Mr. Tuckerberry slammed the door between that room and his private office, and vilified himself mentally that he hadn't closed it before. But he didn't slam it in time. Husband and wife gazed into each other's eyes at the instant the door was closing. Each had employed subterfuges to get away from the other. There was another meeting. There were many, many words of explanation. There was much confusion. And, finally, there were many things addressed in a personal tone to Lyman Tuckerberry.

"How much money have you paid this old hack?" the husband demanded.

"Oh, only a hundred dollars and a few dollars for expenses."

"Well," said the erstwhile Inker, "I've paid him about the same, and I guess he earned that by sending me down in Jersey."

Jane—no more Filmy Jane—smiled with a new and wonderful light in her eyes.

"I don't think he even earned that," she said simply. "It was at my suggestion that he sent you down there."

"Your suggestion?"

"Surely," she replied sweetly. "Didn't I volunteer all the information about where we were married and tell you all about the town? I suspected that you had been sent to see me by my husband, and I knew that if you had been sent, it was in connection with a divorce. I talked New Jersey at you so much that you couldn't think of anything else, and I knew that if he were seeking a divorce, he couldn't get it in this State. I had another lawyer besides you. Suggestion is a wonderful thing! I talked about the old town so much to you that you sent him there, after you decided to send him somewhere. And I knew"—her voice faltered a moment, but only a moment—"I knew the old town would bring him back—bring him back clean."

That evening they crossed the river. The stars never shone brighter, not even in the days before Filmy Jane was Filmy Jane. Behind them lay the city, the haze of its bright lights drifting above. But not once did they look back. They kept on and on, eyes turned hopefully straight ahead, and were presently safe in the open country.



Wisdom *and* Destiny

By Estelle M. Getman Cuff

HE sat in a wide chair before the grate, deeply involved in the mass of letters which lay on his lap, on the floor, on the table beside him. To-morrow this bachelor suite would be his no more; even now, Yama, the Jap, was packing. To-morrow he would stand before the altar and pledge love and fealty to a beautiful woman. But to-day—he had these last precious moments with Aimée. Her letters lay about him endearingly, caressingly. They seemed to twine about his heart with their perfumed messages which spoke so sweetly of her, the absent one, the girl who had had the one absorbing love he could give.

But he could not marry her. He had thought much about it; but he could not marry a girl who had lowered his ideal of feminine loveliness by smoking, and—he had caught *her* smoking. It didn't matter that she assured him on her knees that it was because of the foolish dare of a half dozen mischief-loving girls that she had touched the vile thing, a careless cigarette. He couldn't be sure, he told himself—and *his wife* must not smoke. He had seen so much of it, so much of girls' smoking, and the moral laxity which accompanies it. No, he couldn't have it; he couldn't marry a girl who had smoked, even on a dare. One could never tell—she might not stop.

With a last sigh of regret he threw the letters on the coals and watched the words curl beseechingly toward him as they crumbled to black ashes.

Then he turned to the bottle and glasses which always stood ready on the table beside him.

She, the beautiful woman who to-

morrow would don all the gorgeous raiment of a bride, sat before the fire in her boudoir, wrapped luxuriously in a satin lounging robe, her hair flying about her shoulders from under the gold barrette which held it at the back. On a little tapestry stand beside her lay perhaps a dozen letters, the only ones she had ever received from Stephen, the boy she had idolized. Her eyes were deep and black with longing and a love self-denied as she fingered the oblong missives with their bold, handsome superscriptions. They seemed so alive, so full of pleading for the man she had banished. She had loved him. Heaven, how she had loved him! she thought, as she bowed her head over the letters clutched now in her hand.

But she could not marry him. She had seen him intoxicated, hopelessly and entirely so. Oh, the awfulness of it! And she shuddered. She could not marry a man who drank. They had assured her that it was an accident, that it was the first time in his life that he had ever taken liquor. Even McChesney, alarmed by the ruin he and his pals had wrought in their frolic at that week-end party, had told her that they had all combined to make Stephen Cunningham drunk. But it was useless. She had seen him senseless, under the influence of strong drink—and she couldn't trust her future to a man who drank.

Tears bathed the old letters in a last hallowed farewell as she laid them on the fire, and watched the flames consume them.

Then she drew a monogrammed cigarette from the gold case which always lay handily on the table beside her.

On Beautifying *the* Arms

By Doctor Lillian Whitney

Dr. Whitney is always glad to answer all reasonable questions relating to beauty and health, but she cannot undertake to answer letters which fall to inclose a stamped, self-addressed envelope for reply, or to letters inclosing Canadian stamps. Every week she receives many letters of this sort, in spite of the notice always printed at the end of this department. Sometimes, even, the post office sends notification that letters are being held for her, which careless writers have posted with no stamp. If you have failed to receive a reply to your letter, you may know that it is for one of these three reasons.—EDITORS.

THOSE who possess long, graceful arms with softly rounded or dimpled elbows, smile slyly at Dame Fashion these days, for the short sleeve and the sleeveless garment are for them a great opportunity. And it must be conceded that beautiful arms are a great attraction. Indeed, when gracefully or dramatically used, they are a more distinguishing feature than a pretty face. It behooves all women, then, to care for and improve their arms. Too often they are neglected and abused. Witness the many shapeless, scrawny, heavy-skinned, coarse-grained, red, or discolored arms which one sees these short-sleeved days, for women will follow the fashions, regardless of appearance. When, therefore, the arms invite more attention than the face, one must seek ways and means to beautify them.

There is some balm for one's pride, perhaps, in the fact that ideally formed arms are comparatively rare. But it is well to consider what the perfect arm is to guide one in the work of reconstruction. Now, it would be absurd for the short, broad woman to covet an arm of sweeping length, slender contour, and graceful abandon. Her arms should naturally be short and plump, and they will doubtless be just as expressive as those of her slender sister. The ideal arm is, above all, *shapely*, and conforms to the general size and stature

of its owner. One frequently sees arms of enormous length on comparatively small people, arms which, when hanging, reach quite to the knees; this is abnormal.

Shapeliness is the first consideration. The general contour of the arm must be well rounded. The soft structures—muscle and fat—contribute to this, and can be remodeled at will, with judicious massage and exercise. The flesh must be firm, with fine, clear skin, and free from blemishes. The elbow should be well rounded, not necessarily dimpled, but at least sufficiently covered to conceal the so-called "crazy bone."

While there are all sorts and conditions of arms, the thin, scrawny ones predominate. Angularity in itself is not ugly. We are all acquainted with the Egyptian dances, in which angular positions of the arms are the chief feature. To execute these properly, angular arms are almost a requisite. But, in general, painfully thin, scrawny arms are distressingly unattractive. Besides, they are an indication of lack of robust health. So, in every such instance, especial heed must be given to general body-building.

Weight can be acquired by means of a nourishing, flesh-producing diet, and by the use of a new iron-food product in powder form—about which I shall gladly tell readers, if they will write to

this department. The girl or woman of anæmic constitution and sedentary habits needs especially to look well to her general condition. For her digestion is usually weak, and assimilation of food, however nourishing it may be, is often deferred, so that a state of malnutrition ensues, in which, of course, the arms share. Hence their painful scrawniness.

The iron-food tonic referred to is especially helpful in these cases. Plenty of sleep, an abundance of fresh air and sunshine, daily bathing, and not too much strenuous exercise will make for speedy improvement.

Local treatment of the arms by means of fattening creams, gentle massage, and appropriate exercises is necessary. There is no better tissue builder than the following fattening cream:

Coco butter, two ounces; lanolin, two ounces; olive or almond oil, one ounce; oil of geranium, ten or more drops.

Put the fats in a porcelain kettle over a steamer or hot-water bath. Remove as soon as melted and stir with a porcelain spoon until they are completely mixed. Placing the kettle in cold water while beating the fats will hasten the cooling process. Unless continually stirred, the fats will again separate into their component parts. The perfume may be added just before the cream is put into a wide-mouthed jar and set away for further use.

Before applying the cream, the tissues should be cleansed either with cleansing cream, cleansing meals, or a bland soap, with sufficient hot water to redden the parts. Then rub in the fattening cream with proper massage movements, using ten or fifteen minutes for the process. Wipe off all excess of fat and cover the tissues snugly with cold cloths. To be effective, the treatment should be pursued twice a day.

In order to manipulate the arm, either in bathing or in massaging, so that all the tissues will be stimulated, stretch

out the arm to its full length, then, with the fingers and thumb of the other hand, turn and twist the flesh gently in all directions, meanwhile moving the arm around its axis at the shoulder joint. Rough treatment or hurried movements defeat their end. Gently knead and press the tissues to stimulate and awaken the underlying dormant cells; pinch and pat to bring the blood to the surface. Then, with long strokes, rub the cream into the tingling skin, using the surface of both palm and fingers.

Pure almond oil, although quite expensive now, is an excellent agent for hastening the plumping process. First rub it into the stimulated arm with the stroke movement, then pour some, which has first been heated over a water bath, on strips of absorbent cotton and bind around the arm from wrist to shoulder. Or the arms may be heavily creamed with the fattening cream and bandaged. This is good treatment to carry out at bedtime.

Massage is also helpful in reducing arms which are too bulky. Usually there is a superabundance of fat, and the tissues are loose and flabby. Here a twisting, wringing motion from elbow to shoulder should be used. With a firm, tight grasp take the muscle mass and move it up and down upon the underlying bone. Instead of a fattening cream, an astringent ointment or wash may be used, although heavy massage to break up the fat cells, and vigorous exercise to carry them away in the speeding circulation, is a better, quicker means to attain the end in view.

Subjecting overplump arms to the heating process will also aid in the rapid elimination of fat. For this purpose rubber sleeves should be worn, especially when exercising the arms vigorously, for thereby copious perspiration is induced. Always after such exercise the arms should be bathed with cold water, or, better still, with equal parts of alcohol and water.

Exercise, to be beneficial, must be systematically performed. This fact is demonstrated by the well-developed arms of most women who are active in household pursuits; that is, a certain amount of routine housework daily. Daily, systematic exercise encourages the symmetrical growth which many indolent "society" women envy. In contradistinction to the nicely molded arms of those who get enough systematic exercise, are the coarse, heavy, masculine, almost knotty, arms of heavy workers, women who labor incessantly at hard work, or women who carry outdoor sports to an overzealous length. They are not a pleasing spectacle.

Movements of the arms must embrace all the muscles, while resistance exercises make for a better contour. The following simple developing movements, without apparatus, will markedly improve both the contour and grace of the arms if practiced with unfailing regularity for ten minutes, three times daily:

Extend the arms overhead, in front, or at the sides. Clench the fists and draw them toward the body, against resistance. Repeat this ten times and note the effect upon the entire arm. To develop the forearms clench the fists and place them at the side of the chest. Now, using the right hand, turn the arm and wrist as if putting in an imaginary screw and using considerable force. Gradually move ahead, until the arm is stretched at full length. Now employ the left arm. Each time the arm revolves use a little extra strength, simulating the motion of driving a screw into wood. These movements are against resistance and bring into active play muscles which must be developed if the arm is to be shapely.

Women who indulge their appetites must guard against the too-rapid increase of flesh, and this is best done by exercise with slight apparatus. The punching bag is highly recommended.

To punch the bag properly is a science which few women acquire except under directions from a qualified instructor. However, if the following simple advice is faithfully carried out, the end striven for will be rapidly attained. Place the left foot forward, pointing its toe straight before you; place the right foot back, pointing outward, with a space of two feet separating them. Now swing your clenched right fist at the bag, following quickly with your left, each time raising the corresponding foot slightly at the heel to give the body more spring. Sway very slightly with each punch, never for a moment moving the toes from their original positions, and putting all your effort into the muscles of the arms. Five minutes' practice is sufficient for beginners, as the exercise is quite strenuous. Repeated several times during the course of each twenty-four hours, ten or fifteen minutes of bag punching constitute a wonderful general reducing exercise. The wearing of rubber sleeves makes the exercise doubly beneficial.

The following is a simple exercise which is equally good for under and overdevelopment of the arms: Stand with the feet firmly planted on the floor, with head erect and arms extended horizontally. Now slowly curl the fingers over the palm, bend the wrist upon the forearm and the forearm upon the upper arm, until the doubled hands, tensely held, rest upon the shoulders. All the muscles should be strongly tensed. Hold a moment, relax, and allow the arms to fall loosely at the sides. Repeat ten or twenty times, three times daily.

Out-of-door games make for beautiful development of the arms when both are equally used and the games are not too strenuous.

Albeit shapely and graceful, the beauty of an arm is marred by unsightly blemishes. One often sees an otherwise perfect arm displaying an ugly elbow. And unsightly elbows are

not always due to too-protuberant "crazy bones," but are often caused by the senseless habit of using the elbows overmuch. This habit must be overcome, for the elbow, like any other structure, grows with use, and the skin covering it becomes thick, even calloused.

When bandaging the arms with emollients, it is a good plan to give the elbows special attention. Rub them well with a bland cream, then anoint them thickly with cream and incase with firm bandages. The following is a particularly good emollient cream for the elbows:

Fresh lard, one hundred grains; alcohol (eighty per cent), twenty grains; essence of rosemary, eleven drops; essence of bergamot, eleven drops.

When frying out the lard, add a small bit of powdered gum camphor. Strain the lard, then beat in the alcohol, and just before the cream congeals, stir in the essences.

The skin on the arms is often unsightly, rough, red, pebbly. The roughness is caused by tiny dry pimples, which give the appearance of "goose flesh." To overcome this, wash the arms and shoulders with warm water and a very bland soap. Instead of a wash cloth use a luffa, which is a kind of vegetable sponge. While strong and fibrous, it softens when wet, and produces a delightful friction, removing the scales and dead skin very effectively. Rinse the arms well of all soap, dry thoroughly, then rub with appropriate oils or cosmetics.

Red arms are not to be tolerated. During the reign of Queen Anne the court beauties employed a very simple remedy for making the skin of their shoulders and arms white and the flesh firm. It consisted of the whites of four eggs beaten thick, with a grain or two of alum added. The mixture should be spread directly on the skin, covered with clean old linen, allowed to remain overnight, and washed off the

following morning with tepid water. Soap, even of the finest quality, will injure the skin in time, when used every day. Therefore it is better to use almond meal, which softens, cleanses, and whitens the skin.

Skin which has been allowed to grow yellow and aged can be rejuvenated with little expense, but the treatment requires time and effort. A little lemon juice rubbed directly into the skin several times each week has a bleaching effect, and successfully removes mild discolorations. Benzoin, added to the rinsing water, is good. Lotions and creams containing cucumber juice, elder-flower water, borax, almond milk, citric acid, or peroxide of hydrogen are effective for softening and whitening the skin.

A very simple cosmetic for this purpose contains:

Refined tar, one dram; olive oil, one pint; sufficient violet extract.

This paste should be rubbed well into the arms at bedtime, and a generous amount bandaged on with narrow strips of cotton. Remove in the morning with warm water, bland soap, and a flesh brush or luffa. Used every other night, a pleasing change is soon effected.

Cucumber milk is a specific for redness, roughness, and sunburn. In fact, cucumber remedies—cream and lotion—are of signal value in beautifying the skin. Space forbids giving full directions for making these, but printed slips will be mailed to applicants inclosing stamped, self-addressed envelope. Chronic, all-year-round freckles, brown spots, and the like will not yield even to cucumber juice, the virtue of which lies in the small amount of arsenic it contains. Therefore, stronger bleaches are necessary, and formulas for these are also available.

WHAT READERS ASK

MRS. LAURA B.—Your pallor may be due to anaemia. If so, you require an iron tonic. I am giving you here a facial lotion for occasional use: Liquid ammonia, one dram;

glycerin, three ounces; rose water, four ounces. Rub this lotion into the skin briskly. Also take deep-breathing exercises and long walks in the open air. I will go into further detail if you will write me, inclosing a stamped, self-addressed envelope.

AGNES M.—Local flesh reduction can be accomplished by strenuous exercise of the parts. It must be kept up unremittingly, however, to be of avail. External applications may help some, but alone they do little good. There is on the market a pomade which you will like. I will send you the name of it on request.

M. A. T.—A lotion for chronic freckles and tan consists of corrosive sublimate, two grains; lemon juice, one ounce; rose water, four ounces; powdered borax, one-half dram. Apply with a camel's-hair brush or absorbent cotton. Label the mixture *poison*, and keep it out of the way. I do not publish formulas for stronger bleaches. What you possibly require is an arsenical bleach. If so, write me, inclosing stamped, self-addressed envelope.

HERMIT.—It gives me pleasure to tell you that an iron preparation, similar in every respect to the famous German product you inquire about, is now on the market. It is a sovereign remedy in all debilitated conditions, in anæmia, the treacherous "flu," for thin, undernourished persons desirous of increasing weight, and so on. I shall be glad to put you in touch with this product on receipt of a stamped, self-addressed envelope.

HARKESS.—I refer so often to the hygiene of the intestinal tract, because the chief factor involved in a large number of diseases is toxemia—poisoning—arising from abnormal intestinal conditions. The late Professor Metchnikoff contended that the span of human life would be greatly lengthened if the large intestine could be extirpated. We may not all subscribe to such an extreme measure, but it is certainly true that the residue of food, remaining too long in the large intestine, undergoes putrefactive changes which are highly dangerous to health. For this reason I advocate drinking plenty of water, a diet that embraces some laxative foods, and plenty of exercise, particularly breathing exercises. Do you want a list of these?

SEVENTY-TWO.—A woman is never too old to take an active interest in her appearance. Personal pride is not only a feminine char-

acteristic, but bespeaks refinement, consideration for others, and a love of beauty. You are underweight. Why not let me put you in touch with a tonic in powder form, which contains iron, the use of which will quickly build you up? Write me, inclosing a self-addressed, stamped envelope.

MOLLIE.—Here is a liquid powder which adheres even in a warm room. I do not advise using it except for special occasions. Rose water, 4 ounces; zinc oxide, $\frac{1}{4}$ ounce; tincture of benzoin, 10 drops.

HECTOR.—You should read my article on foot troubles in the August issue. Write to me for corn and bunion cures. Are you always careful to be perfectly fitted in footwear? This is most important.

OLD READER.—I am glad that so much of benefit to you is contained in these pages. Here is a lotion for dry hair which will do even more than you expect: Askanet root, $1\frac{1}{2}$ ounces; oils of mace, cloves, and rose, 10 grains of each; oil of cinnamon, 30 grains; tincture of musk, 8 grains; oil of almonds, $\frac{1}{2}$ pint. The root of askanet should be placed in the jar of almond oil and set in the sun until the mixture turns pink. It should then be strained, and the other ingredients added. Apply to the scalp, not to the hair, with the finger tips.

ROCHESTER.—You will find the above formula an excellent remedy for stimulating the scalp and overcoming dandruff. Do not wash your hair—or, rather, scalp—with soap and water every day. This oily preparation is in itself cleansing. Rub the scalp briskly for ten minutes morning and night. In your case, apply a large quantity of the oil and allow it to soak in.

CURIOUS.—An outstanding ear, undesirable from the point of beauty, doubtless enables one to hear more acutely, as the external ear collects sound waves and conducts them to the tympanum, or eardrum. Dressing the hair low behind the ears is one way to make them less conspicuous.

MYRTLE M.—The normal chemical reaction of the blood is alkaline. Acid blood causes many painful disturbances, and is best overcome by a rigid diet of neutral and alkaline foods. Yes, peroxide of hydrogen is acid, because the essential element of all acids is hydrogen. Lemons are a good corrective of hyperacidity. Do you want a list of corrective foods?

Doctor Whitney will be glad to answer, free of charge, all reasonable questions relating to beauty and health. Private replies will be sent to those inclosing a self-addressed, stamped envelope. Do not send Canadian stamps or coins. Address: Beauty Department, SMITH'S MAGAZINE, 79 Seventh Avenue, New York.



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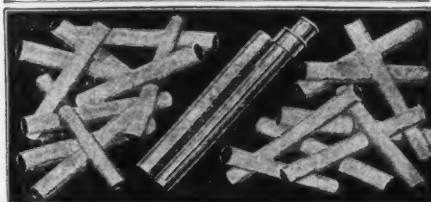
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“It’s not alone what a man does *during* working hours, but *outside* of working hours—that determines his future. There are plenty of men who do a good job while they’re at it, but who work with one eye on the clock and one ear cocked for the whistle. They long for that loaf at noon and for that evening hour in the bowling alley. They are good workers and they’ll always be just that—ten years from now they are likely to be right where they are today.

“But when you see a man putting in his noon hour learning more about his work, you see a man who won’t stay down. His job today is just a stepping-stone to something better. He’ll never be satisfied until he hits the top. And he’ll get there, because he’s the kind we want in this firm’s responsible positions.

“Every important man in this plant won out in the same way. Our treasurer used to be a bookkeeper. The sales manager started in a branch office up state. The factory superintendent was at a lathe a few years ago. The chief designer rose from the bottom in the drafting room. The traffic manager was a clerk.

“All these men won their advancements through spare time study with the International Correspondence Schools. Today they are earning four or five times—yes, some of them *ten* times as much money as when they came with us.

“That’s why I say that Jim there is one of our future executives. Keep your eye on him. Give him every chance—he’ll make good!

Employers everywhere are looking for men who really want to get ahead. If you want to make more money, show your employer that you’re trying to be worth more money. If you want more responsibility, show him you’re willing to *prepare* yourself for it.

For 28 years the International Correspondence Schools have been training men and women right in their own homes after supper, or whenever they had a little time to spare. More than two million have stepped up in just this way. More than 110,000 are studying now. Ten thousand are starting every month. Can you afford to let another priceless hour pass without making your start toward something better?

Here is all we ask—without obligation, mark and mail this coupon. It’s a little thing that takes but a moment, but it’s the most important thing you can do today. Do it now!

INTERNATIONAL CORRESPONDENCE SCHOOLS

BOX 3500, SCRANTON, PA.

Explain, without obligating me, how I can qualify for the position, or in the subject, before which I mark X.

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> ELECTRICAL ENGINEER | <input type="checkbox"/> SALESMANSHIP |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Electric Lighting and Railways | <input type="checkbox"/> ADVERTISING |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Electric Wiring | <input type="checkbox"/> Window Trimmer |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Telegraph Engineer | <input type="checkbox"/> Show Card Writer |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Telephone Work | <input type="checkbox"/> Sign Painter |
| <input type="checkbox"/> MECHANICAL ENGINEER | <input type="checkbox"/> Railroad Trainman |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Mechanical Draftsman | <input type="checkbox"/> ILLUSTRATING |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Machine Shop Practice | <input type="checkbox"/> Cartooning |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Toolmaker | <input type="checkbox"/> BUSINESS MANAGEMENT |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Gas Engine Operating | <input type="checkbox"/> Private Secretary |
| <input type="checkbox"/> CIVIL ENGINEER | <input type="checkbox"/> BOOKKEEPER |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Surveying and Mapping | <input type="checkbox"/> Stenographer and Typist |
| <input type="checkbox"/> MINE FOREMAN OR ENGINEER | <input type="checkbox"/> Cert. Public Accountant |
| <input type="checkbox"/> STATIONARY ENGINEER | <input type="checkbox"/> TRAFFIC MANAGER |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Marine Engineer | <input type="checkbox"/> Railway Accountant |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Ship Draftsman | <input type="checkbox"/> Commercial Law |
| <input type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECT | <input type="checkbox"/> GOOD ENGLISH |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Contractor and Builder | <input type="checkbox"/> Teacher |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Architectural Draftsman | <input type="checkbox"/> Common School Subjects |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Concrete Builder | <input type="checkbox"/> Mathematics |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Structural Engineer | <input type="checkbox"/> CIVIL SERVICE |
| <input type="checkbox"/> PLUMBING AND HEATING | <input type="checkbox"/> Railway Mail Clerk |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sheet Metal Worker | <input type="checkbox"/> AUTOMOBILE OPERATING |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Textile Overseer or Supt. | <input type="checkbox"/> Auto Repairing <input type="checkbox"/> Spanish |
| <input type="checkbox"/> CHEMIST | <input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE <input type="checkbox"/> French |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Navigation | <input type="checkbox"/> Penitentiary Training <input type="checkbox"/> Italian |

Name _____
 Present _____
 Occupation _____
 Street _____
 and No. _____
 City _____ State _____

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CLASSIFIED ADVERTISING

Agents and Help Wanted

GOVERNMENT POSITIONS are desirable. Let our expert former Government Examiner prepare you. We study for free booklet giving full information. Patterson Civil Service School, Box Y, Rochester, N. Y.

HOW MUCH GASOLINE CAN YOU SELL AT 2c PER GALLON? World tests for four years to prove it. Secure exclusive rights for your county. "Carbonoid," Box "2," Bradley Beach, N. J.

WE START YOU IN BUSINESS, furnishing everything; men and women \$30 to \$100 weekly operating our "Specialty Candy Factories" anywhere. Booklet free. Bagdale Co., Box 98, East Orange, N. J.

BE A DETECTIVE. Excellent opportunity, good pay, travel. Write C. T. Ludwig, 436 Westover Building, Kansas City, Mo.

SELL our hosiery and underwear direct to consumer. Large line—good profits—prompt delivery guaranteed. Samples ready. Write, The C & D Co., Dept. 15, Grand Rapids, Mich.

MEN—Age 17 to 55. Experience unnecessary. Travel; make secret investigations, reports. Salaries; experience American Foreign Detective Agency, 114, St. Louis.

DO YOU WANT TO EARN \$3,000 to \$5,000 a year? You can do it easily. See Advertisement—Anderson Steam Vulcanizer in this issue.

AGENTS—\$40-\$100 week. Free samples. Gold Sign Letters any one can put on store windows. Liberal offer to general agents. Metallic Letter Co., 451 E. N. Clark, Chicago.

SALESMAN—CITY OR TRAVELING. Experience unnecessary. Send for list of lines and full particulars. Prepare in spare time to earn the big salaries—\$2,500 to \$10,000 a year. Employment services rendered. Members. National Salesmen's Training Association, Dept. 107, Chicago, Ill.

\$10.00 WORTH of finest toilet soaps, perfumes, toilet waters, apices, etc., absolutely free to agents on one sale. American Lac-San Co., Dept. 427, St. Louis, Mo.

DETECTIVES EARN BIG MONEY. Travel. Great Demand. Experience unnecessary. Particulars free. Write, American Detective System, 269 Broadway, N. Y.

AGENTS—Large manufacturer wants agents to sell hosiery, underwear, shirts, dresses, skirts, waists, shoes, clothing, etc. Write for free samples. Madison Mills, 503 Broadway, New York.

\$28 to \$46 WEEKLY in your spare time doing special advertising work among the families of your city. No experience necessary. Write today for full particulars. American Products Co., 2346 American Bldg., Cincinnati, O.

AMBITIOUS? WE WILL ESTABLISH you in business; manufacture article wanted everywhere under your name, for 35c. each (retailing \$1.50); show you how to reach consumers, dealers, agents, personally and by mail; furnish everything, and advertise for you free. Tremendous repeat business; Kaley of Brooklyn made \$1,000 one month. Write for proof. Scientific Laboratories, 295 Court St., Brooklyn, N. Y.

NEW DISCOVERY! Big steady income. Spare time. No canvassing or mail order. Ferber Company, 296 Broadway, New York.

EXTRAORDINARY opportunity offered ambitious men to become distributors for new product being marketed. No competition; demand everywhere. Valuable exclusive rights free. Complete sales helps and full co-operation assures success. Start small and grow. \$1,000 automobile free. Opportunity to establish business netting \$10,000 yearly. Garfield Mfg. Co., Dept. S, Garfield Bldg., Brooklyn, N. Y.

TIRE AGENTS. EXCLUSIVE REPRESENTATIVES to use and sell Mellinger Extra-Fly Tires. Guarantee. Bond \$600 Miles. Factory Prices. Free Sample sections furnished. Mellinger Tire Company, 976 Oak, Kansas City, Missouri.

SALESMEN & BROKERS wanted. We offer the best Companies' stocks. Liberal commissions paid. Bank references furnished. Harwell Brokerage Company, Wichita Falls, Texas.

Agents and Help Wanted—Continued

RAILWAY TRAFFIC INSPECTORS earn from \$110 to \$200 per month and expenses. Travel if desired. Unlimited advancement. No age limit. We train you. Positions furnished under guarantee. Write for Booklet CM 28, Standard Business Training Institute, Buffalo, N. Y.

Patents and Lawyers

INVENTORS desiring to secure patents should write for our guide-book "How To Get Your Patent." Send sketch or description for our opinion of its patentable nature. Randolph & Co., Dept. 412, Washington, D. C.

PATENTS. Write for Evidence of Conception Blank and free guide book. Send model or sketch and description for free opinion of its patentable nature. Highest references. Prompt Attention. Reasonable Terms. Victor J. Evans & Co., 767 Ninth, Washington, D. C.

PATENTS. Highest references. Rates reasonable. Best results. Promptness assured. Lawyer, 624 F Street, Washington, D. C.

PATENTS. Trademark. Copyright—foremost word free. Long experience as patent solicitor. Prompt advice, charges very reasonable. Correspondence solicited. Results procured. Metzger, Washington, D. C.

PATENTS—Send for free book. Contains valuable information for inventors. Send sketch or your invention for free opinion of its patentable nature. Prompt service. (Twenty years experience.) Talbert & Talbert, 4507 Talbert Bldg., Washington, D. C.

PATENTS promptly procured. Moderate Fees. Best References. Send Sketch or Model. George P. Kimmel, Master of Patent Law, 1815 Loan & Trust Bldg., Washington, D. C.

Mail Order Business

I MADE \$25,000 with small Mail Order Business. Sample article 25c. Free Booklet. Stamp. Also Scott, Cohoes, N. Y.

Business Opportunities

THE BANK PAYS YOU 4%. Would you be interested in 1925? Finance Co., 802-4 Western Indemnity Bldg., Dallas, Texas.

Songs, Poems, etc.

WRITE the Words for a Song. We write music and guarantee to secure publication. Submit poems on any subject. Broadway Studios, 1590 Fitzgerald Building, New York.

WRITE words for a song. We write music, guarantee publisher's acceptance. Submit poems on patriotism, love or any subject. Chester Music Co., 920 S. Michigan Ave., Room 823, Chicago.

WRITE WORDS FOR A SONG. We write music, publish and secure copyright. Submit poems on any subject. The Metropolitan Studios, 914 S. Michigan Avenue, Room 129, Chicago.

HARDING'S (Established sixty years) prints, publishes, composes and arranges music for authors. Catalogs and music free for sample. Frank Harding, Music Printer, 228 East 23d St., New York.

SONG-WRITERS' GUIDE SENT FREE! Contains valuable instructions and advice. Submit song-poems for examination. We will furnish music, copyright and facilitate publication or sale. Knickerbocker Studios, 501 Galety Bldg., New York.

HAVE YOU SONG POEMS? I have them for sale. Ray Hibbler, D102, 4640 Dickens Ave., Chicago.

YOU Write the Words for a Song. We'll compose the music free and publish same. Send Song-Poem to-day. B. Lenox Co., 271 W. 125th St., New York.

Vaudeville

GET ON THE STAGE! Experience unnecessary. Send stamp for instructive booklet "All About Vaudeville." LaDelle, St. 255, Jackson, Mich.

Short Stories and Photoplays

WRITE NEWS ITEMS and Short Stories for pay in spare time. Most right Book and plans free. Press Reporting Syndicate (406), St. Louis, Mo.

WRITE PHOTOPLAYS: \$25-\$300 paid any one for suitable ideas. Experience unnecessary; complete outline free. Producers League, 439 St. Louis.

PHOTOPLAYS wanted. Big prices paid. Great demand. We show you how. Get free particulars. Box Publishers, Box 175-P, 14, Chicago.

\$50-\$100 weekly writing Moving Picture Plays. Get free book; valuable information's price offer. Photo Playright College, Box 278, X. Y. 19, Chicago.

FREE to writers—A wonderful little book of money-making hints, suggestions, ideas; the A B C of successful Story and Screen writing. Absolutely Free. Just address Authors' Press, Dept. 89, Auburn, N. Y.

FREE TO WRITERS—Expert Criticism. Stories, etc., sold on commission. Also want Photoplays and Ideas for California Producers. Experience unnecessary—Plot Chart Free. Submit Story and write Harvard Company, Marvin Building, San Francisco, California.

Duplicating Devices

"MODERN" DUPLICATOR—A Business Getter. \$1.50 up. 50 to 75 copies per pen, pencil, typewriter; no glue or plate. 40,000 firms use it. 30 days' trial. You need one. Booklet free. L. T. Durkin, Levees & Co., Pittsburgh, Pa.

Wanted to Buy

MAIL DIRECT TO THE REFINERS any old gold, silver, massicot pellets, old watches, diamonds, platinum, old or broken jewelry, false teeth, gold or silver ore or nuggets, War Bonds, Stamp and them to us to-day. Highest prices paid in cash by return mail. Goods returned in 10 days if you're not satisfied. The Smiths, 233 Lennox Bldg., Cleveland, Ohio.

Personal

DO YOU WISH TO KNOW whether you are to gain success, win friends, be happy, or the reverse? Scientific, convincing information. Wonderful results claimed by patrons. "Key to Success" and personality sketch for 10 cents and birthdate. Thomson-Heywood Co., Dept. 800, Chronicle Bldg., San Francisco.

ASTROLOGY—STARS TELL LIFE'S story. Send birth date and dime for trial reading. Edw. 4307 Jefferson, Kansas City, Missouri, Apartment 74.

CLASSY girl pictures—2 beauties 25c; sixteen \$1; refunded if dissatisfied. Rosenthal, St. Louis, Mo.

YOUR FUTURE. Business, health, marriage. "Mystery of Success" and reliable scientific test, for dime and birthdate. One year's events one dollar. Plato, Box 102, Buffalo, N. Y.

Shorthand

SHORTHAND. Best practical system. K. I. Shorthand, learn in 5 hours; speed with easy practice. Proof lessons, brochure free. King Institute, EA-26, Station F, New York.

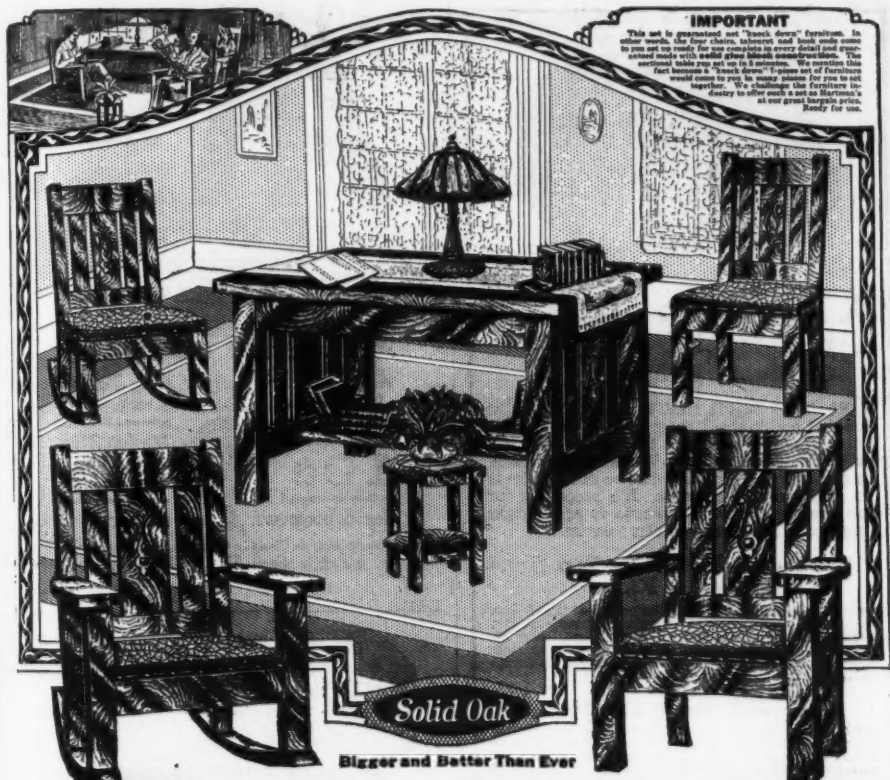
Candy

CHERI Super-Chocolates Assorted lb. box \$1.25 P. P. prepaid, insured. Best you ever tasted or the box with our compliments. Cheri, 145 S. 15th, Phila.

Nichigan Farm Lands

LANDSEEKERS! Good land, opportunities in Antrim and Kalamazoo Counties, Michigan. Big yields of grains, fruit, truck. No swampy, timbered land. \$15 to \$25 per acre. Easy terms. 10 to 160 acre tracts. R. R., markets, schools, churches. Good fishing, hunting; fine climate. We help settlers. Write for free booklet. Be Independent. Swartz Land Co., X1285 First Nat'l Bank Bldg., Chicago.

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Brings the NEW Hartman 7-Piece Solid Construction Living Room Suite

Even better than ever is this famous suite—made more massive, still more sturdy in construction—a marvelous work of the furniture makers' art—the masterpiece for 1920-21—sent for only \$1 now and on 30 days' free trial.

Full Year to Pay

Complete suite consists of large arm rocker, large arm chair, library table, sewing rocker, desk or side chair, tabouret and book ends. Genuine mission, rich brown finish showing the beauty of the grain of the wood.

Solid Oak Orna mented with richly embossed carved design on panels of chairs, rockers and table, giving a wonderfully pleasing effect. The chair and rocker

seats are constructed in a strong, durable manner and upholstered in imitation Spanish brown leather. Most comfortable, lastest style and beautiful. Large arm chair and large rocker stand 34 inches high and 24 inches wide. Large arm chair and large rocker have seats 21x18 inches. Other rocker and chair have seats 17x16 inches. Handmade table is 24x36 inches and tabouret has octagon-shaped top about 12 inches wide, standing 17 inches high. Large arm chair and large rocker right side of set easily support large boxes. Shipped to factory in central Indiana or factory in western New York state. Shipping weight about 160 lbs. Order by No. 10BEMAS. Price \$59.95. Pay \$1 down. Balance \$3.00 monthly.

FREE Bargain Catalog Mail us a
postal for this great book today.

HARTMAN FURNITURE & CARPET CO.
3913 Wentworth Ave. Dept. 2709 Chicago, Ill.

IMPORTANT

IMPORTANT!
This set is guaranteed not to "knock down" furniture. In other words, the four chairs, table and bench ends come to you set up ready for use complete in every detail and guaranteed to last for years. The set is made of solid wood. The sectional table you set up in 5 minutes. We mention this fact because a "knock down" 1-piece set of furniture would come to you in many pieces for you to set together. We challenge the furniture industry to offer such a set as Hartman's at our great bargain price.

If you don't find this splendid suite just what you want, re-

HARTMAN FURNITURE & CARPET CO.

3913 W. North Ave. Dept. 2709 Chicago
Enclosed find \$1. Send the 7-Piece Living Room Suite No. 110BBMA as described. Guaranteed not "knock down." I am to have 30 days' trial. If not satisfied will ship it back and you will refund my \$1 and pay freight both ways. If I keep it I will pay \$3.00 per month until the price \$38.85 is paid.

Name.....
Address.....
City..... State.....

Please mention this magazine when answering advertisements



A Big Raise in Salary

Is Very Easy to Get, if You
Go About It in the Right Way

You have often heard of others who doubled and trebled their salaries in a year's time. You wondered how they did it. Was it a pull? Don't you think it. When a man is hired he gets paid for exactly what he does, there is no sentiment in business. It's preparing for the future and knowing what to do at the right time that doubles and trebles salaries.

Remember When You Were a Kid

and tried to ride a bike for the very first time? You thought that you would never learn and then—all of a sudden you knew how, and said in surprise: "Why it's a cinch if you know how." It's that way with most things, and getting a job with big money is no exception to the rule, if you know how.

We Will Show You How

Without loss to you of a single working hour we can show you a sure way to success and big pay. A large number of men in each of the positions listed are enjoying their salaries because of our help—we want to help you. Make check on the coupon against the job you want and we will help you get it. Write or print your name on the coupon and send it in today.

American School of Correspondence
Dept. G-64, Chicago, Ill., U.S.A.

American School of Correspondence,
Dept. G-64, Chicago, Ill.

I want job checked—tell me how to get it.

.....Architect.	\$5,000 to \$15,000	.....Lawyer.	\$5,000 to \$15,000
.....Building Contractor.	\$5,000 to \$10,000	.....Mechanical Engineer.	\$4,000 to \$10,000
.....Automobile Engineer.	\$4,000 to \$10,000	.....Shop Superintendent.	\$3,000 to \$7,000
.....Automobile Repairman.	\$2,500 to \$4,000	.....Employment Manager.	\$2,000 to \$4,000
.....Civil Engineer.	\$5,000 to \$15,000	.....Steam Engineer.	\$2,000 to \$4,000
.....Structural Engineer.	\$4,000 to \$10,000	.....Foreman's Course.	\$2,000 to \$4,000
.....Business Manager.	\$5,000 to \$15,000	.....Photoplay Writer.	\$2,000 to \$10,000
.....Certified Public Accountant.	\$7,000 to \$15,000	.....Sanitary Engineer.	\$2,000 to \$5,000
.....Accountant and Auditor.	\$2,500 to \$7,000	.....Telephone Engineer.	\$2,500 to \$5,000
.....Draftsman and Designer.	\$2,500 to \$4,000	.....Telegraph Engineer.	\$2,500 to \$5,000
.....Electrical Engineer.	\$4,000 to \$10,000	.....High School Graduate.	In two years.
.....General Education.	In one year.	.....Fire Insurance Expert.	\$5,000 to \$10,000

Name..... Address.....

A-K TABLETS FOR All Pain

**Headaches
Neuralgias
Colds and La Grippe**

**Women's Aches and Ills
Rheumatic and Sciatic Pains**

**Ask Your Druggist for A-K Tablets
(If he cannot supply you, write us)**

Small Size

10c



Dozen Size

25c

See Monogram K on the Genuine
The Antikamnia Remedy Company, St. Louis, Mo.
Write for Free Samples



FREE DIAMOND RING OFFER

Just to advertise our famous Hawaiian Im. diamonds—the greatest discovery the world has ever known. We will send absolutely free this 14k gold 1 ring, set with a 1.25 Hawaiian Im. diamond—in beautiful ring box. Postage paid. Pay postmaster \$1.25 C. O. D. Charges to cover postage, boxing, advertising, handling, etc. If you can tell it from a real diamond return and money refunded. Only 10,000 given away. Send no money. Answer quick. Send size of finger.

KRAUTH & REED, Dept. 412
MASONIC TEMPLE CHICAGO

Your Chance to Make Big Profits in Vulcanizing

Here is your chance to get into a highly profitable business which will make you independent.

are in demand everywhere. Many of our graduates make \$3,000 a year and over.

We make the Anderson steam vulcanizer and Anderson retreader and teach you the famous Anderson Method of Vulcanizing. Our students make good because they can do superior work with the Anderson machine and method and do it at one-tenth the cost required by all other vulcanizers. Highly satisfied customers and large profits mean a paying business. Not only are we able to convince you of this, but we invite you to compare the Anderson machine and method with others.

We have installed Anderson schools of vulcanizing in 30 states for teaching the Anderson method of vulcanizing. The course requires 5 to 10 days and costs \$25. If you buy an Anderson vulcanizer we return you \$25, and pay you \$5 per day expense money while learning.

Our reputation is valuable. We expect Anderson vulcanizers to do work which will outlast the rest of the tire. We expect Anderson students to succeed in a business way. Their success is our success. Therefore we do not sell an Anderson vulcanizer to anyone who has not received our course of instruction. Don't miss this opportunity. Write today for full particulars and address of Anderson school nearest to you.

ANDERSON STEAM VULCANIZER CO.
32 Williams Bldg., Indianapolis, Ind., U. S. A.

Print your name to avoid mistakes

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Quick! Your Horn

—and a fraction of a second
might mean an accident
that you could never forget.
WHY TAKE A CHANCE?



Horn Button

—attaches to the throttle lever where it is under the driver's fingers at all times, leaving the hands on the wheel where they belong, especially in an emergency that requires the quick sounding of the horn. The installation is very simple, requiring no special tools or machine work. Furnished complete with directions.

Write for catalog showing every Ford need in the Apco line. Insist that every attachment you buy for your Ford bears the Apco name. Why not be sure of the best your money will buy?

APCO MANUFACTURING CO.
PROVIDENCE U. S. A.





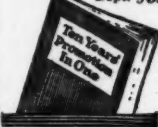
Home Study Business Courses

Do you want an important, high-salaried position? You can have one if you can do the work. LaSalle experts will show you how, guide you step by step to success and help solve your personal business problems. Our plan enables you to fit in during spare hours without interference with your present duties. Give us your name and address and mark with an "X" below the kind of position you want to fill. We will mail catalog and full particulars regarding our low cost monthly payment plan. Also our valuable book for ambitious men, "Ten Years' Promotion In One". Tear out and mail this advertisement today. No obligation to you. Let us prove to you how this step has helped thousands of ambitious men to real success.

Coupon

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Training for positions as Auditors, Comptrollers, Certified Public Accountants, Cost Accountants, etc.
- ☐ **BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION:**
Training for Official, Managerial, Sales and Executive Positions.
- ☐ **TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT—FOREIGN AND DOMESTIC:** Training for positions as Railroad and Industrial Traffic Managers, etc.
- ☐ **LAW:**
Training for Bar; LL.B. Degree.
- ☐ **COMMERCIAL LAW:**
Reading, Reference and Consultation Service for Business Men.
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Training for positions as Correspondents, Mail Sales Directors, and all executive letter-writing positions.
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Training for positions as Foreign Correspondent with Spanish-speaking countries.
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Training in the art of forceful, effective speech for Ministers, Salesmen, Fraternal Leaders, Politicians, Clottomen, etc.
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LaSalle Extension University
The Largest Business Training Institution in the World
Dept. 965-R Chicago, Illinois



[Name]

[Present Position]

[Address]



Like sleeping on a fleecy cloud

As you recline on an Ostermoor your muscles and nerves relax—a few moments of drowsiness—and you drift into slumberland.

OSTERMOOR MATTRESS

No bumps, lumps, hollows, or sagging. Eight billowy Ostermoor sheets are hand laid in a tailor-made tick and carefully tufted.

Insist that the mattress you buy is an Ostermoor. And look for the Ostermoor label.

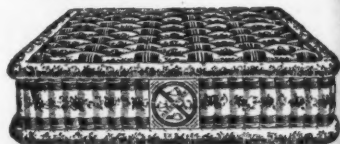
Sold by good dealers everywhere.

Send for free samples of ticking and big catalog. If convenient, visit our big salesrooms in New York.

OSTERMOOR & COMPANY
114 Elizabeth St., New York



Canadian Agents,
Alaska Bedding
of Montreal, Ltd.,
Montreal.



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Picture-Play Magazine?

Bubbling Over With Screen News

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No Money Down

Elgin
Watch

On 10-Day Trial

New, thin model
Elgin watch, war-
ranted movement
in 14-kt. gold-filled
case, 20-year
guarantee.

Decide for your-
self. If you keep
it, this beautiful
high class watch
may be paid for
at less than 7
cents a day.

Chain
and Knife
FREE

A 14-kt. gold-filled
knife and chain
absolutely free
with this offer.
State if you wish
a Waltham,
Elgin or other
Dietrich, or your
chain.

Less Than 7c a Day

If you are pleased when
the watch comes send only
15c as first payment.
Then wear the watch for
ten full days. If you do not
consider it the greatest

value in America, return
it at our expense and your
deposit will be refunded
immediately. If you de-
cide to buy, send \$2.00 a
month until \$22.50 is paid.

Order Today —On Trial—

type or annoyance. State which chain you wish. This
offer limited. Act now. Send your name to Dept. 90-G.
Our 128-page catalog shows more than
2000 different watches, jewelry, watches
and jewelry. Write for it NOW.

J.M. LYON & CO., 1 Maiden Lane,
New York, N.Y.

14-kt.
Gold-Filled
Case
20-year
Guarantee



The Dollar Value of High School Training

HAVE you ever thought *why*
so many employers demand a
High School training of their employees—
why the lack of it bars you from the best
positions? Take English and Mathematics,
for example. What high-grade position
such as accounting, engineering or execu-
tive work—can be handled *rightly* without
a knowledge of mathematics? How can
costs, operating expenses and overhead be
accurately computed without it? How can
you write good business letters and reports
or sell goods without a command of English?
There is a positive cash value to having a High
School training. It means many more dollars to
you, because it throws open to you high-grade po-
sitions from which you are now barred.

Don't Be Handicapped

Thousands like YOU—who were laboring under the
handicap of not having had a High School training
—have taken advantage of the American School
course and REMOVED THEIR HANDICAPS.
This course has been specially prepared for home
study by noted professors. It is complete, covers
all requirements, and will remove the biggest
obstacle between you and success.

If you have already had some part of a High
School training, you can start in exactly where
you left off. We'll credit you with what you have
taken and make the tuition fee in proportion with
the special course you require.

Read this Guarantee—then Act

"We guarantee at any time during the first year of
your enrollment to refund the entire amount paid
if, immediately upon the completion of ten ex-
aminations, you notify the School that you
are not satisfied with your course."

AMERICAN SCHOOL of
Correspondence
Dept. HC4
CHICAGO



TRAINING—THE KEY TO SUCCESS

Please send me booklet and tell me how
I can fit myself for the position marked X

ASC

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|High School Graduate |Steam Engineer |
|Western Union Courses |Lawyer |
|Telephone Engineer |Business Manager |
|Draftsman and Designer |Cert. Public Accountant |
|Automobile Engineer |Accountant and Auditor |
|Automobile Repairman |Bookkeeper |
|Airplane Mechanic |Stenographer |
|Fire Insurance Expert |Gen'l Education Course |
|Sanitary Engineer |Comm. School Branches |
|Heating and Ventilating
Engineer |Electrical Engineer |
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|Shop Superintendent |Building Contractor |

Name

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"I can hear you with the MORLEY
PHONE." It is invisible, weight-
less, comfortable, inexpensive.
No metal, wires nor rubber. Can
be used by anyone, young or old.
The Morley Phone for the

DEAF

is to the ears what glasses are to
the eyes. Write for Free Booklet
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users all over the country. It
describes causes of deafness;
tells how and why the MORLEY
PHONE affords relief. Over
one hundred thousand sold.

THE MORLEY CO., Dept. 758, 26 S. 15 St., Phila

PSC'S for Coughs & Colds

Cuticura Talcum

Fascinatingly Fragrant

Always Healthful

Sample free of Cuticura Laboratories, Dept. D, Malden,
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FREE
Send the Coupon

Ready now! The wonderful Baird-North Style Book for Fall. Shows most exclusive fashions, how to select the style best suited to you and how to get quality clothes at prices which give you best values. It is free. Send coupon or a post card—today.

Two examples of Baird-North values given here. Order either or both of these direct from this ad.

Sport Hat

Soft Duveltyne—richly embroidered all over in floss and metallic thread. Close fitting upturned flexible brim. Drop ornaments at front. Very chic. Look where you will and you will not see a smarter model. Choice of four colors.

Order Orange by No. 19E9601. Order Brown by No. 19E9603. Order Navy Blue by No. 19E9605. Order Rose by No. 19E9607. Price \$9.75. Postage 10c extra.

Scarf Coatee

No need to "look around" if you want a stunning over-garment. Look at this shaggy scarf coatee, knitted on soft, lustrous camel's hair wool. Very warm. About 72 in. long, 22 in. wide. Lengthened with close fringe. Belted and has 2 pockets. See if you can equal it for class and serviceable quality. Choice of 3 colors. Order Brown by No. 14E5937. Buff (tan) No. 14E5939. Peacock Blue No. 14E5941. Price only \$10.98. Postage 6 cents extra.

NOW Get the book and see the other great offerings in fashion's latest modes. No other book like this. It is your reliable guide. Send the coupon today.

Baird-North Co.

391 Broad St. Providence, R. I.

Gentlemen: Please send me a copy of your book of advance Fall styles.

Name.....

Add.....

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Send No Money!

Ladies' Solitaire—
Examination Free,
10 Months to Pay.

Examine ring FIRST, then if you decide to keep it pay only \$2.00. Buying direct assures you the Rock Bottom Price.

A perfectly cut blue-white Diamond in ladies' solid gold setting at only \$2.80 a month!

Take Advantage of this amazing offer to-day. **YOUR MONEY BACK** if you are not satisfied. No Security—No red tape.

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Whether you order this ring or not, let us send you this De Luxe Catalog FREE, containing descriptions of rings, watches, diamonds and other articles of jewelry. Everything sent on FREE EXAMINATION. Address Dept. 968, Capital \$1,000,000

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L.W. SWEET INC.
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Clear Your Skin

YOUR skin can be quickly cleared of Pimples, Blackheads, Acne Eruptions on the face or body, Enlarged Pores and Oily or Shiny Skin by a new treatment called

"Clear-Tone"

If you have any of the above Facial Blemishes, write for FREE Booklet, "A Clear-Tone Skin", telling how I cured myself after being afflicted for 15 years, and my offer to send a bottle of Clear-Tone on trial.

E. S. GIVENS 113 Chemical Building Kansas City, Missouri



Send Us Your Name and We Will Send You a Lachnite

DON'T send a penny. Just say: "Send me a Lachnite mounted in gold ring on 10 day's free trial." We will mail it prepaid right home. When it comes merely deposit \$2.75 with the ring wear the ring for 10 full days. If you, or any of your friends can't wear it back and we will return your deposit. If you decide to buy it—send us \$2.50 a month until \$15.75 has been paid. **Write Today** Send your name now. Tell us which of the solid gold rings you wish (included) and we will send your finger size.

Harold Lachman Co., 12 N. Michigan Av., Dept. 1925, Chicago

SUGAR 4 $\frac{1}{2}$ ¢ Per Lb.

You know how hard it is to get sugar, even when you pay the big price demanded by grocers, and what it means to be able to buy it direct from us at only $4\frac{1}{2}$ cents a pound. Yet sugar is only one of a long list of groceries on which we can save you money. Just in order to prove what a big advantage you have in dealing with us, we list below a trial order which saves you \$1.20. Regular value of these articles is \$3.19—our price only \$1.99. And we guarantee that every item is absolutely pure, fresh, standard high grade—just what you have been paying about twice our wholesale price for. You wouldn't think of going back to the costly old way of buying groceries after you have proved the economy of buying from the Big 4 Grocery Bargain Catalog. Send only \$1.99 with the Trial Order Coupon below, and begin saving money right away.

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Remember that with your first order you get a free copy of our big wholesale catalog which saves you money on all your grocery purchases. Here are just a few catalog specials. Sold in wonderful money-saving combinations.

FLOUR, **\$7⁹⁸**
Per Barrel

SUGAR **\$4⁵⁰**
100 Lbs.

Uneda Biscuits **35¢**
12 Packages for . .

Quaker Oats **4¢**
Large Package . .

Rush your trial order at once and get our wholesale grocery catalog in which you will find many of the most startling grocery bargains ever offered.

References We are one of the leading Wholesale Grocers in Chicago. Our bank, Foreman Bros. Banking Co., or any mercantile institution in Chicago, can tell you about us.

We Guarantee you absolute satisfaction or your money back. In every instance you get pure, fresh goods of the very highest quality. Send coupon for trial order today.

BIG 4 COMPANY

112-118 N. May St. Dept. 1141 Chicago

Trial Order No. 14

Big 4 Wholesale Prices

2 pounds Granulated Sugar . . .	\$0.09
1 bar Fels Naptha Soap . . . . .	.02
1 bar Ivory Soap . . . . .	.04
1 package Big 4 Brand Best Tea . .	.35
$\frac{1}{4}$ pound pure Cocoa . . . . .	.13
1 pound pure Baking Powder . . . .	.45
1 4-oz. bottle Vanilla Flavor Extract	.52
1 box Powdered Bluing (equal to about	
1 gallon average best bluing) . . .	.29
1 Box Majic Dye Soap Flakes . . .	.10
Total (You Save \$1.20)	\$1.99

Mail Coupon Now!

Our low prices merely indicate what you can now save on all your groceries, a full line of which is listed in our Wholesale Catalog—The Big Money Saver. This catalog sent to customers only. A free copy will be sent with your first order. Send coupon NOW—TODAY.

Trial Order Coupon

Big 4 Company Dept. 1141
112-118 N. May St., Chicago, Ill.

Gentlemen:—Enclosed find \$1.99 for which send me at once your Trial Order No. 14, and a copy of your wholesale Grocery Catalog, free. It is understood that if I am not satisfied, I may return the goods at your expense and you will return my money at once.

Name

Address

Express Office

On Every Hand!



EVERY living man and woman with hands should own at least one pair of Boss Work Gloves.

They protect from dirt, dust, grease, and many minor injuries.

In spite of their sturdy, wear-well texture and construction Boss Work Gloves are not clumsy. They allow you free "feel" of your work.

And there is no end to their usefulness. And they are so economically priced that everyone can afford them.

The mechanic or teamster at his work, the

housewife at hers—men, women, girls, boys, everybody, everywhere need Boss Work Gloves.

Keep a pair handy and slip them on whenever you work with your hands—even in doing the little odd jobs about the house such as tending the furnace, beating the rugs, taking down the screens, working in the garden, changing a tire, cutting the grass or making ice cream.

Boss Work Gloves are made with band, ribbed, and gauntlet wrists. Sizes for men, women, boys and girls in varying weights to suit every conceivable requirement.

THE BOSS MEEDY—The world's favorite work glove for odd jobs around the house and garden, and all light hand work. Made of the best quality, medium weight canton flannel.

THE BOSS HEVY—The best bet for all work that requires a strong, wear-resisting glove. Made of the very best quality, heavy weight canton flannel.

THE BOSS XTRA HEVY—The world's champion heavyweight hand-wear for rough work. Made of the finest grade of extra heavy canton flannel.

THE BOSS WALLOPER—This is the super work glove. Strong, flexible and built for rugged work. Made of the highest quality, heaviest weight canton flannel.

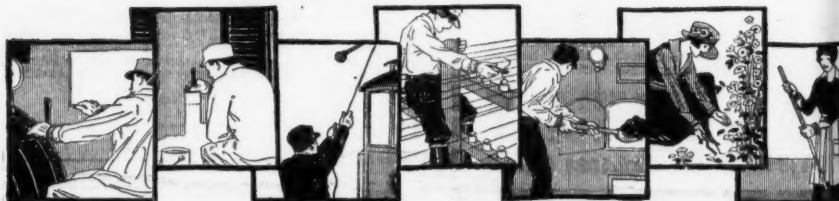
The Boss line includes highest quality leather-palm, jersey, ticking and canton flannel gloves and mittens

THE BOSS MANUFACTURING CO., Kewanee, Ill.

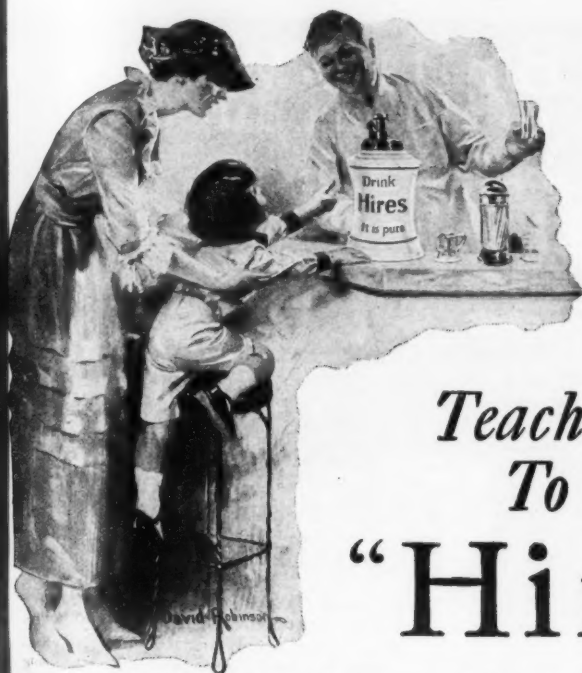


Trade Mark
This Trade-mark identifies genuine Boss Work Gloves

Be sure it is on every pair you buy.



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*Teach Them
To Say*
“Hires”

HIRES is good for all ages—at all times. Every one of the sixteen Hires ingredients is a product of Nature from the woods and fields, collected from all parts of the world.

Nothing goes into Hires but the pure healthful juices of roots, barks, herbs, berries—and pure cane sugar. The quality of Hires is maintained in spite of tremendously increased cost of ingredients. Yet you pay no more for Hires the genuine than you do for an artificial imitation.

But be sure you say “Hires” to get Hires. At fountains, or in bottles, at your dealers. Keep a case at home and always have Hires on ice as first aid to parched palates.

THE CHARLES E. HIRES COMPANY, PHILADELPHIA

Hires

Hires contains juices of 16 roots, barks, herbs and berries

The Brunswick Method of Reproduction



A Finer Reproducer *that plays ALL makes of records*

The Ultona, pictured above, is one of the many advancements offered by the Brunswick Method of Reproduction.

At a turn of the hand, it presents to each type of record the proper needle, the proper diaphragm and the exact weight, thus playing each record as intended. No attachments are necessary.

Each record is heard at its best, for the Ultona develops hitherto hidden tones and brings out all the beautiful shadings. This is a great invention found exclusively on The Brunswick. It alone should make your choice a Brunswick.

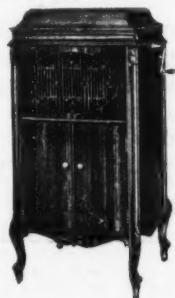
But there are other dominating superiorities. As, for instance, the Brunswick Tone

Amplifier, built entirely of wood. The old-time, cast-metal throat is abandoned.

The Brunswick Amplifier develops tones scientifically, according to acoustic laws. Tone is fuller, completer and absolutely realistic. Metallic sounds are absent.

These and other features of the Brunswick Method of Reproduction have accounted for the tremendous success of this super-phonograph. The most critical music-lovers have made it their choice. So will you, once you hear it. For its superiority is instantly evident.

Go to a Brunswick dealer before you make your choice. Ask to hear The Brunswick. Note its superiorities.



THE BRUNSWICK-BALKE-COLENDER COMPANY

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*Sharp?
Oh Boy!*

THERE'S nothing like these wonderful Durham-Duplex Blades for a cool, safe, satisfying shave. Made from the finest Swedish steel, oil-tempered, hollow-ground and sharpened to an exquisite cutting edge. Extra long and double-edged to give you the greatest shaving mileage. And *guarded* to give you absolute protection when shaving.



DURHAM-DUPLEX

A Real Razor—made Safe

Standard Set with 3 Detachable Blades \$1.00

Consisting of the razor, safety guard and 3 two-edged blades. Packed in a durable, sanitary case of American ivory. Just the thing for traveling bag or kit. *Other sets \$2 to \$12.*

Additional Blades 50 Cents for a package of 5



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Growing up with COLGATE'S

A wise mother judges not only by height and weight, but by general health. And there the faithful care of the teeth plays a large part. That is why her children grow up with Colgate's—the safe, sane, *delicious* dentifrice. Do yours?

Regular tooth brushing is a treat, not a task, with Colgate's Ribbon Dental Cream.

